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MISSIONARY MORALE

PROWLING ABOUT PANAMA

# Adventures with Christ in Latin America

By  
GEORGE A. MILLER



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TO MY WIFE MARGARET,  
TO WHOM I OWE MY FIRST  
AWAKENING TO MISSIONARY  
VALUES AND WHO, FOR A THIRD  
OF A CENTURY, WITH UNFAILING  
PATIENCE AND UNFALTERING  
COURAGE HAS SHARED THE AD-  
VENTURES, LABORS AND FELLOW-  
SHIPS OF AN ITINERANT LIFE.



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## WHY THIS BOOK?

THIS is not a description of the natural resources, climate, or scenery of Latin America. Of the mighty cordillera, the overflowing tropics, the shadows of the long West Coast, the charms of old Mexico and the economic and ethnic possibilities of the southern temperate zone others have written numerous and adequate volumes.

Nor is this a collection of prize missionary stories. Latin America has contributed its share of missionary enterprises, trials, and successes, and it is not difficult to give them an interesting presentation. Some of these will serve here as illustrations of basic principles and significant movements now dominant in Latin American life. The various activities, projects, and methods of the evangelical approach to Latin life find their higher meaning as notes in one tonic chord, the triumphant proclaiming of Jesus Christ in his redeeming power for personal lives and social institutions.

There is an element of high adventure in any effort to make Christ known to men. No one can predict the reactions of any race or individual to our message. The pioneers of the

Kingdom have always gone out into the unknown and untried, staking all upon the thesis that Christ is the one sufficient remedy for a sick world. These pages are reflections from the fruitful experiences of men and women who have given their lives to Latin America and who profoundly believe in its strategic world-position and outstanding values for mankind.

## CHAPTER I

### WHY MISSIONS IN LATIN AMERICA?

A GROUP of missionary teachers in a South American country was discussing the question, "Just what are we trying to do here, anyway?" The answer was not so easy to find as might appear to those who have not realized the far-reaching complexity of the missionary's program of service.

After a time one young man, principal of a boys' school, put it this way: "We are here to do a lot of different things, in detail, but I think that they all come at last to this; we are here to represent Jesus Christ; and if we fail in that, all our other doing comes to nothing that justifies our coming."

"I wish that I could feel that I am doing that," remarked a young woman. "It is hurry and teach and discipline and visit and correct papers and wonder what they are up to now, until I feel as unlike a missionary as possible. If I had known that I was coming down here to do all this, I would have thought several times before I packed my trunk. I would like to know how all this tearing about, sixteen hours a day, is going to present Christ to anybody."

“Exactly that way. It all depends on how you do those very things. If for me to teach is for Christ to teach, for me to correct papers is for Christ to correct papers, for me to visit and discipline and deal in a hundred ways with sometimes difficult boys is the same thing approximately as for Christ to do it, then, speaking with all reverence, I am presenting him as effectively as though we were running revival meetings every day in the year.”

Silence fell on the gathering, a few even stopped their fancywork and the meeting closed with something to think about.

We have come to a new emphasis in our work in so-called foreign lands. There was a time when the missionary went out to save the heathen from hell. Sometimes he came back and held his watch for a breathless minute and then told us that while the sixty seconds had ticked themselves into eternity so many hundreds or thousands of immortal souls had gone down to the torments of an eternal perdition because they had never heard of the name of Jesus Christ. It was time to hurry.

Aside from some independent extremists, very few enter missionary service to-day with that motive. Rightly or wrongly, we do not teach that men go to hell who have never had a chance to go anywhere else. For one thing, there was a



usually unconscious but nevertheless inevitable smack of superiority and condescension about the old approach. We *were* superior, of course. Did we not bring with us a better brand of nearly everything?

It is inevitable that most new missionaries should suffer more or less from the "United States complex." Just plain patriotism would seem to require that the young American stand up for Uncle Sam and all his works, especially since he is so far ahead of everybody else. That the peoples to whom we go feel exactly the same way about their own countries and are apt to look with suspicion, not to say dislike, upon our ubiquitous flag-waving, may come as a surprise to the complacent new missionary, full of the old home-town spirit. Of course, poor people, they are only foreigners, but what veteran among us can forget the shock of his own first discovery of the astonishing fact that he himself was the foreigner, very much on the outside of the whole social situation, trying to get a glimpse of the inside, often through a very small linguistic knot hole?

To merge one's nationality in universal humanity is a great achievement, to the attainment of which there is but one effective approach, and that through the spirit and teachings of Him in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian

nor Scythian, European, Asiatic, African, nor Latin, but one world full of needy people. There is a risk implied in the removal of race barriers, and only in Christ is that risk worth taking.

It makes all the difference in the world how we approach our fellow men and what we carry with us in our minds and hearts. Some of us have been suspected of perpetrating a new version of the Great Commission—"Go ye into all the world and teach the English language." We have gone to all the world, including Mexico and Central and South America, with our English language as a door-opener, and we have also taken with us Anglo-Saxon supremacy, empirical science, medicine, farming, trades, up-to-date clothing, foods, fashions, college spirit, and much else besides. In Latin America we have pretty effectually insulated the newly arrived teacher from effective contacts with national life, by insisting that he report for duty in the class room at eight thirty on the morning after arrival. There was always something that could be taught in English.

We have succeeded in these Latin lands, sometimes beyond our own hopes. A warm-hearted people has received us and has readily recognized our friendly attitude, our neighborly interest in them and the service-motive that in some form dominates the heart of every missionary.

There is a certain universal appeal in the cup of cold water, the friendly home visit, the classroom teaching, or any other service rendered in a spirit of frank neighborliness.

There is possible a mutual coming together of missionaries and the leaders of the peoples about them, provided there be found a common ground. The missionary and national teachers, working together day after day, come to understand each other, and back of this personal fellowship lie all the larger possibilities of race and language groups. Out of the personal adjustments grow the beginnings of national agreements. And basic to all larger fellowships lie the transformations of personality into terms of the one Common Denominator of humanity, even Christ Jesus.

Latin America has sometimes received scant attention in world-missionary councils, and the ideals of Pan-Americanism have never profoundly gripped the hearts of the people of the United States. Most of our international thinking has run around the world east and west. When we go abroad we usually cross the Atlantic. We are but dimly conscious of our all-American community, inhabited by a score of national families, besides a number of insular neighbors of the Caribbean suburb. The future of our own civilization and the hope of perma-

ment peace for mankind are intimately bound up with the moral and spiritual progress of the Latin civilization that prevails from the Rio Grande to the Straits of Magellan. Some great religious experiments have been thoroughly made among these peoples. We know what ecclesiasticism, superstition, intolerance, and priestcraft have done and will do when they have control of the situation. It remains to be seen what Jesus Christ can do when he has a fair opportunity in their lives. He has made a beginning abundant with promise of larger things to come.

Through all the missionary plans, programs, and activities of the last half century of seed-sowing in Latin America runs one explanation of our successes and reason for our failures. In proportion as we have made ourselves one with the people about us and have revealed Christ to them, he has wrought his own impact upon the institutions of human life. Wherein we may have concealed him beneath our imperfections, rather than released him to do his own work in his own way, we have failed. No man single-handed can present Christ to a civilization; it takes a living church to produce an effective missionary and give him the backing of spiritual life and material equipment that enable him to become a true ambassador of the King of kings.

## CHAPTER II

## LATIN LANDS OF PROMISE

THE allurements of the externals of life in Latin America is apt to mislead the passing pilgrim or the newly arrived resident. Human life in these Spanish-speaking lands is varied, stimulating, picturesque, and interesting at any time and in every place. There is something about it that gets into one's consciousness and calls him back after he goes away. It is all so different from the uniformly correct and prosperous life of the United States of America, with its rows of houses, its wide streets lined by laborious lawns, its impossible traffic conditions, the flaming way-side billboards, the universal public utilities and every-family-some-kind-of-a-car.

With all due respect to the abundance of goods in the United States, we claim that Latin America is different, decidedly so, from all these things, and whatever else we may think of it we cannot escape its compelling interest. There are contrast and variety, light and shadow, squalor and splendor side by side. Rags, robes, huts, palaces, deserts, flowers, beggars, officials, toilers, idlers, homeless girls, butterfly daughters of the rich, garbage piles, exquisite gardens,

bare walls, fountains, crippled dogs, canaries, vultures, birds of paradise, flea-bitten donkeys, limousines, loaded llamas, auto-trucks, crumpled-up old men, smiling, chubby children—such are the details of the picture. Whatever else may be said, there is overflowing interest.

He who has become a-weary of the conventionalized routine of a settled social system may well betake himself south and merge his life with the unfolding pageant of humanity en route from the cradle to the grave, as exhibited on every highway trodden by human feet in any major city of Latin lands. Just such scenes must have spread about the feet of Him who, seeing the multitudes, was moved with compassion because they were as sheep having no shepherd.

From Mexico City an ancient highway leads westward across the mountains to the city of Toluca. Leave the old Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan (otherwise the modern City of Mexico) any Saturday morning on this Toluca road and meet the procession coming in. From two days' journey away they come on foot, and pretty lively foot at that. Old men and maidens, young men and children, all trudge along mile after mile, every back piled high with produce for the Sunday market in Mexico. What loads they balance! Bulging rolls of matting, crates of pottery, coops of chickens, vegetables, furniture,



fruit; it is the produce of a province walking to market on the backs and legs of human beings. Yesterday morning they set out, to-morrow afternoon they will begin the return journey, loaded with gew-gaws and trinkets from the maelstrom at the center that has sucked up their little stock of goods and given them scant return. In shadowed doorways, in dark alleys, in the court of the cathedral they will spend the cold night on the stones, in the latter case hoping for a little extra merit or spiritual benefit, or just luck, as you please, from the aroma of the sanctuary.

One wonders what would happen if Jesus came in bodily presence to Mexico and mingled with this throng of tired, hungry, ignorant, patient, smiling humanity. Would anyone pay any attention to him? Certainly, what happened in Jerusalem long ago would once more take place; the priests of the temple would again pass by on the other side and plan how they might get rid of this disturber of a going business.

That Jesus Christ is even now present in Latin America may be known by the mouths of many witnesses who have seen him and known him and who even now show forth his works and his spirit. There are other evidences also, not the least of which is the perseverance with

which the chief priests and scribes of to-day continue to plot the overthrow and persecution of his people. There must be some deep-down reason for this, and there is, the same reason that sent him to the cross once before.

One does not tarry long in any Latin land without forgetting the scenery and finding absorbing interest in the people. The cactus of the northern deserts has a strange attraction for weary minds, but even those appealing wastes or the monkish hermitages at El Desierto lose their charm when the pressing needs of living creatures crowd about. Convent gardens may be dreamy and musty with suggestive tradition, but hungry people begging at the doors have more eternal values than shaded corridors or fading paintings of mediæval saints.

Panama streets and balconies and shops and orchids are interesting, but the most interesting item in Panama is the pansy-shaded conglomerate of assorted humanity from the ends of the earth. Fifty thousand population is it? Seemingly there are nearly that many kinds and colors of people and there must needs be at least one of a kind.

The roof of the southern continent has scenery in abundance, so much of it that it is piled up in grotesque heaps all about, but one lone Indian on a hilltop, with his ear-flap cap and shepherd



staff, standing among his sheep and llamas, has more eternal value than all the rocks and mountain peaks.

Treasures of art and architecture and carved temple façades that are veritable lacework frozen in stone—you find them everywhere, but whose hands wrought all this magic of curve and line and who patiently toiled over the glorious gilded altars of Cuzco and Tepotzatlan and Cordoba?

There are countless shrines where alleged miracles keep alive the superstitions of multitudes and fill the deep pockets of the priests at the annual festivals of wooden saints that look inanely down on living men and women. Often have I stood beside them and seemed to hear once more the voice of Christ saying, "Is not one of the least of these my brethren of more value than all these things?" And shall not the very beggars at the doors enter into the kingdom of heaven before all these grafters and traffickers in hungry hearts?

There is a bewildering beauty about the architecture of old Mexican churches. Towers of stone and domes of glazed and colored tile, beautiful turreted spires, storied pinnacles rising up and up, façades, altars, transepts, paintings, carved doors, vaulted arches, ancient courts are everywhere. What ever were they trying to do, those

old builders who wrought for the glory of God, and with such command of human toil that they planted their churches by flowing streams, on towering hills and beside winding roads, not to speak of most of the street crossings? Possibly there has never been anything quite equal to it. But, one may stand amid the throngs on a saint's day and witness the splendor and pomp and arrogance of it all, and it needs but a moment of closed eyes and inner vision to see the form of Him who was despised and rejected of men, seeking solitary to find his way into his temple, and moving about among the hungry people touching here and there a broken life or healing a bleeding heart. I think that he would not pay much attention to the jeweled robes and imposing pageantry before the high altar, and I am pretty sure that he would be put out if he tried to pass beyond the gilded railing.

There is the Cathedral at Curnavaca, most impelling of all the old shrines of the country side. Here is the real thing—enormous old walls, yards thick, rising stark upward with an immense buttress thrown out where once the original building began to lean. The courtyard is big enough for a town Plaza and the minarets along the side wall look like ghostly vultures, keeping watch by the waiting tomb for the last death-rattle of a dying faith. Inside there is no

great display but everywhere on the walls are stains where the centuries have signed the register and sunk out of sight. Anyone who can spend a half hour here and not carry away an unforgettable and unnamable something out of the past, is spiritually defective. An old Indian—some way every Indian is potentially old—sat with his staff on the curb of the fountain and gazed stolidly at nothing at all. He appeared to be lost in thought, but more likely he was thinking also of nothing at all. What, indeed, had he to think about? His ancestors had built this old pile, under skillful tutelage of their betters, the priests. But somehow these priests never taught an Indian to build a school-house nor a decent dwelling place for the toiler and his family. And after four hundred years of cathedrals and domes and art and gilt and gems and robes and incense and pomp and power and profit, the Indian is exactly where he was when the conquerors came and began the tenthousand-a-day baptizing of the unresisting inhabitants of a subjected land.

Down in the banana countries there are some striking subjects for good landscape painters. Try the Almirante Bay of the Muskito coast of Panama, and you will forget all else for the time. The Thousand Islands and the Inland Sea and the Fukien coast and the shores of Maine have

nothing to boast over the Chiriqui Lagoon. White, sandy beaches with high royal palms and everywhere in the background the crowding jungles reaching out for more. But among those lofty palms nestle the huts and grass shanties of the West Indians who furnish the hands and feet and backs without which the banana business would cease overnight. And one church full of starched-and-ironed, swaying, singing humanity or one schoolhouse of black boys and girls growing up to Christian citizenship and service, after all, has more value than the uncounted millions of the big banana companies. At least I sometimes think that if Christ came to Bocas del Toro and were to make an inventory and sign an appraisal, he would set up the case in some such fashion.

There are enormous rivers in the far south-land. Not only the Amazon, which with all its multitudinous tributaries long ago got into society, but the almost unknown Parana and Uruguay. Twenty-five hundred miles from its mouth the Parana is still navigable, and its banks are lined with lands that may yet nourish civilizations as great as our own.

There are the measureless pampas of the far south, and the deserts stretching away toward Patagonia, and the glaciers and big sheep lands of the regions about the southern Straits, all of

them potential cradles of civilizations yet unborn. How I would like to stand on the deck of a South American steamer and listen to Christ himself put his own appraisal upon the values that lie latent in those regions to which the world must yet turn for food supplies and population outlets and training grounds for human endeavor!

Reduced to its inner essence, life in Latin America is not a monument, a monastery, nor a tomb filled with relics of bygone splendor. Life is a cradle, the cradle of growing youth and abundant power. The representative of Jesus Christ is here not a "priest of glories past, but a prophet of greatness yet to come." Here are to be enacted some of the major dramas and greater triumphs of the ages ahead of us. It will make a deal of difference to the humanity of a thousand years hence what ideals, education, politics, government, commerce and faith and hope and fellowship are to dominate these new forming and rapidly growing civilizations of the south. And if He could stand among us in visible presence and give us his counsel, I think that he would do as he did so many years ago, gather into his arms some of the bright-eyed youngsters that swarm the streets and patios and remind us that here is our main task, to follow these little ones into the kingdom of

heaven and keep them from slipping out and back into the superstition and exploitation that for four centuries have cast a blight of spiritual death over these fair lands.

## CHAPTER III

## CHRIST, THE COMMON DENOMINATOR

It is easy to be misled by the common name of the two Western continents. We are all Americans, to be sure, but it would have tended to clearness of thinking if some other name could have been given to the land south of Panama.

Further confusion arises from the assumption on the part of the people of the United States of a monopoly of the term American. This is due, partly to the impossibility of making an adjective of our national name and partly to our limited experience in thinking north and south. When dealing with Europeans or Asiatics, we are Americans, but our use of the term annoys our southern neighbors of the Latin countries. If they are not also Americans, what are they?

As matters stand there are two great civilizations on American soil, of which the English-speaking peoples form one. There are twenty republics in the Western world of which the United States is one. There are two language groups of which we form a part of one. Of all the territory that bears the geographical name of America the United States inhabits less than one fourth.



With all due recognition of the vast resources of the United States we have some marked limitations and deficiencies that are supplemented by the riches of Latin America. The largely unexplored resources of the Amazon valley, the enormous wealth of the Andean mines, the yet undeveloped food possibilities of the Central and South American tropics, the spreading pampas and plains of the south temperate regions all belong to Latin America. The only areas of fertile land yet uninhabited and in the temperate zone, which may serve for the nurture of future populations driven from the overcrowded lands of the north, are in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and southern Brazil. Argentina alone has room for two hundred millions of people and South America could, if developed, feed the world.

We may well take satisfaction from the growing intimacy and friendliness of the peoples of the north and south. If there were no other consideration, the possibility of forming an American bloc of nations pledged to world peace would make it worth while to get together at whatever cost of personal interests. We have a northwest and southeast American highway with some twenty property holders along its eight thousand miles. Every consideration of self-interest and neighborhood prudence would



suggest that we get together and organize some sort of community improvement association on an all-American scale. Certainly, we shall get nowhere by throwing stones at each other across the boundary lines nor making faces at the folks next door.

The linguistic barrier is difficult but not insurmountable. It is hard to get to like people when we cannot understand what they are saying to us. The Latin, like ourselves, resents a foreign speech and dislikes an interpreter. The traveler in China suffers a less serious handicap and may even gain a certain prestige for the moment by the presence of his official interpreter. The Chinese themselves shift linguistic gears every few hundred miles and cannot understand each other. But in Latin America with its common speech (with the Portuguese variant) it is a different case, so different that the deaf-and-dumb visitor who has to employ some one to do his talking for him is often greeted by polite but unmistakable weariness.

How acute is this language question, the veterans well know. "Let the other fellow work the front of his head, I will use the top of mine," is the foolish boast of the beginner who has his lesson yet to learn. But once the language barrier is broken down, there are no peoples more ready to respond and quick to give of their best

to a speaker. Never was a more fruitful field for evangelism, in the best sense of the term, but it must be evangelism that can be understood.

Every veteran missionary can tell tales of effective approaches through this linguistic door. A superintendent new to his field was given a rousing reception. The program was of high order and included three addresses of welcome. The text of the first address, roughly paraphrased, was, "Thanks be to God, at last we have a superintendent whom we can understand." Heretofore such visits had meant a tiresome interpretation, and who knew whether the interpreter was saying the same things as the interpreted? Followed a second address on the theme, "Thank the Lord at last we have a man who can understand us." Who wanted to tell his private troubles to a man through a third party? The closing address revolved about the subject, "Thank God at last we have a superintendent with whom we can deal in our own language." Doubtless the interpreter did his best, but how was anyone to enter into the ideals and aspirations of a people when he could not even understand what they were saying to him? So occupied were they both with the linguistic features of the case that they could think of nothing else worth talking about. It is strange? Put yourself in their place.

In every language the most characteristic and revealing phrases are those that defy adequate interpretation. Our English speech is full of short, sharp, driving words that go through and land with a snap. Such is English speech and such are those who speak it. How proud we are of our blunt directness!

It would be hard to find a more direct contrast with all this than Spanish speech. Smooth, flowing, abounding in delicate shades of meaning, often round-about, always graceful, "it is a shame to say anything in ten words when it might be said in fifty," and the reason therefor is that it may be said so much more elegantly in fifty than in ten. In English we ask how forcibly it may be said, in Spanish, how gracefully.

Take a single example. The Spanish word "*simpatico*" sounds as if it might be related to the English word "sympathetic," and so it is, but very distantly. "*Simpatico*" means "sympathetic"—but much more. A person who is *simpatico* is kindly, and gracious and likable and congenial and often good to look upon. If the visitor to Latin lands is *simpatico*, he will have a wonderful time. Everybody will be his friend and sometimes go to absurd lengths to do him honor. But if he is "*anti-patico*," heaven help!—no one else will. Better travel somewhere else. Those intending to visit South

America will do well to take a course in "simpatico" before they leave home. Incidentally, it may be worth trying out in the United States once in a while.

All of which supplies abundant and direct evidence of the desirability of getting closer together the civilization of go-getter-ism with that of "simpatico"; the combination will be valuable for both.

One of the first things needful for the new missionary is to learn never to say "No." This at first comes with something of a shock. Saying "No" is a sort of measure of moral manhood among us. We sing, "Have courage, my boy, to say no!" and we say it with an abruptness that at least leaves no doubt as to what we mean. How proud we are of our sawed-off negative! No is NO!

But it gradually dawns on the new-comer to the land of courtesy that, after all, there may be another way of doing it, and that this softer speech may be highly effective. I once tried to take a photograph in a forbidden zone in Japan in war time. A smiling and abjectly apologetic little official approached and most humbly bowed, scraped, shook his head and motioned me away. Had he been brusque about it, I would have got my picture, but he was so mild that for the life of me I could not get it done.

And when some national pastor comes with an impossible request, one learns at last to avoid the heartless negative and take a moment to say that in the visitor's place one would doubtless be making the same request, that the project has many good points, that if it were possible it would be granted and that one really regrets that as matters now stand, it is impossible to grant the petition, but that it may be worth while to wait a little and see how the situation develops.

"Sixty seconds wasted?" Not at all. Sixty seconds spent in softening the blow and showing a little human sympathy with a brother man who does not get what he asks but does get something, after all, quite valuable to him, and to us all—a little touch of human feeling for a man with a request.

All of this has a direct bearing on the question of an all-American get-together. This has been tried various times and with none too much success. Simon Bolivar, dreamer that he was, caught a vision of one great America banded together for common interests and called a congress of all nations at Panama in 1816. But the attendance was disappointing. Jealousies were in the background, and no great matter came of it.

Various Pan-American gatherings have been

held here and there from time to time for the consideration of scientific, commercial, educational and political matters of interest to all America. The results have not been all that might have been expected. Language barriers, petty rivalries, jingo leadership, and demagogue partisanship have worked against the uniting of common cause among these western republics. But steadily through the nineteenth century the ideas of common interests and good will have survived every outburst of ill will and exaggerated depicting of the "terror of the north." The Monroe Doctrine opened a long chapter in American diplomatic history, too complex to enter here, but it may be said that the unilateral feature of that principle has become an increasing irritation to the southern republics and a menace to the closest relations between them and us.

Others have written fully the history of Pan-American relations and have analyzed the causes of the too modest successes thus attained. I believe that there is but one final solution to the problems involved in getting together and that we have been led to avoid that solution, partly because human nature is what it is and partly because no other nations have ever really applied the teachings of Jesus to the final solution of international problems. In Latin America,



the prevailing religious emphasis of Spanish-speaking lands is one of indifference to the claims of Jesus Christ as a peacemaker and is hostile to any other interpretation of religion than that of the confessional and the mass.

The final approach to effective all-Americanism must be made in terms of personal understanding and good will rather than through the devious channels of diplomatic intrigue. With the Latin, everything is personal. "What's a constitution, between friends?" passes as humor, to be sure, but indicates a psychic drift, nevertheless. "We impersonal drivers of the United States have shown a positive genius for giving offense to our more gracious Latin neighbors," said a statesman when discussing the situation in Panama. "When we go into the uplifting business, we are apt to do it by the nap of the neck." We lay down principles; they deal in personalities. We insist that people should fit the circumstances, be they long or short, the giant sawed off to fit the bed. They are more inclined to keep a constitution conveniently about for use when needed, as our mothers used to do with the camphor bottle on the pantry shelf.

The so-called idealism of the Latin mind flourishes in a thousand forms, often without moral motive power to make it go. Never was a

people more fluent in picturing the desirable end in view, or drafting a highly finished outline of the project under consideration. But no project gets anywhere in Latin America without a driving personality behind it, which, of course, is to say that, after all, they are very much like ourselves.

Two great needs thus emerge, the need of personal interpreters between the civilization of the north and that of the south, and the need of a Supreme Personality morally and spiritually powerful enough to transform ideals into action and concepts into conduct. and to introduce us to the best in each other.

Taking into account the whole sweep of international relations on American soil, we come to the inevitable conclusion that there is little hope of any permanent get-together except on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount and the ethics of Christ himself. When we go at each other, each intent upon his own ideals, the ideals clash. When we come closer together, impelled by the idealism of the Master, we are inevitably all drawn to a common center, as hearts moved by the same forces. We dicker and dodge about with our diplomatic schemes and sometimes end divided by greater distances than when we began. We gather about the feet of Him who loved us all and gave himself for us and set for



us a Way of life, to find our differences melting away as we become brethren in Christ Jesus.

The final binder is a unity of personal experience, not political theory. Language and education supply meeting-ground for the common experiences of life. If the missionary from the United States has had any measure of success in his approach to Latin life, or attained any degree of influence among the people of the south, it is because he bears some resemblance to Jesus Christ and in that appeal has awakened vibrations of universal sympathy in the human heart.

Only those fractions can be added together that have a common denominator. If we attain any combination of the various elements found in the two great civilizations of the north and south, it will be when we have reduced the ideals and experiences of outstanding men and women of both groups to a common knowledge of the mind that was in Christ and a common regard for each other, founded upon our discovery of our inviolable brotherhood in Him.

Back we come to the question of interpreters. We need human interpreters of heart and soul and spirit, of ideals and dreams and aspirations and hopes and fears. Perhaps the missionary serves his highest purpose in some such office. If he may in some way lead the way to the

knowledge of Him who ever lives to make intercession between individuals and races and nations, bringing together in one the leaders of every nation and kindred, then we have some positive hope of becoming ultimately one in Christ Jesus.

I was speaking with an ex-superintendent of education in one of the Latin American republics. We were talking of international good will and he earnestly remarked: "Mr. Miller, I have given this much thought and I believe we are moving toward an ultimate bi-lingual civilization that will take in all America. We of the south will know enough English to read your literature and talk with your people, and you of the north will come to know and understand our speech and ideals. And together we shall conserve the best in each of us and strengthen what is good in both of us."

A noble ideal, surely, but as I have given consideration since to its possibilities I fall back always upon the primary essential of a ground of common understanding in the very hearts of us and that will be found only as we come to know Him who made of one blood all races of men to dwell together upon the earth. Language barriers may be broken down, commercial interests may be united, diplomacy may tie us together superficially with treaties and agree-

ments, but unless we find common ground and come to know and like and love each other, all will be but a rope of sand in the hour of trial and we shall again be at each other's throats.

Somewhere down beneath all these agreements between nations north and south we come to the final demand for an internationalism broad enough and deep enough to furnish soil for the tap roots of life in every race and nation. We will run together at last, if we can go deep enough. The blight of so many of our efforts to get together is their superficiality. We have so many "ifs" and "buts" and preferences and reservations that the whole scheme breaks under the strain and we fall apart again.

Certainly, we shall never solve the missionary problems that grow out of the emerging national spirit on any basis of race competition. Out of all the experiments and efforts yet made to bind races and men together comes one great, clearly demonstrated principle, namely, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus." In him we may become one in purpose and motive and experience, and without him humanity seems destined to continue its divided, competitive, and destructive way to the end.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE DECISIVE APPROACH

ULTIMATE success or failure in the work of a foreign mission often does not depend upon the most obvious factors in a situation. Education, background, motives, and material equipment are of high value, but all of them together will go crashing to defeat without a certain other factor that sometimes receives scant consideration on the part of candidates and committees.

This often decisive element in the missionary's total equipment is his own personal approach to his work and to the people of his field. There is nothing very spectacular about the term or anything connected therewith except the results which inevitably follow the right or wrong mental attitude of the missionary.

Some of us are by nature slow to get our bearings. I well remember how consciously superior I felt when I first saw, over the prow of the steamer, the land I had come to serve. Surely, they would recognize that I represented a something very much ahead of anything that they had to offer and would be duly grateful to me for coming. The extreme politeness of the natives on first contacts seemed to confirm my

ideas. Two years of service, mostly rendered to an American-speaking church in a foreign capital, did not remove this attitude of mind. The average American abroad in business or diplomatic service rarely recovers completely from his instinctive sense of superiority.

Later on I went to another field, and it took three years and some effective beginning on a foreign language before I began to suspect that, after all, there was something deeply defective about my approach to the whole situation. Not until I found myself thousands of miles from any English-speaking community did my re-education begin in earnest. This was not an easy process, either for me or for my teachers, but I shall never forget the patience with which my national friends labored with me, gently hinted at my errors, kindly intimated that I was on the wrong track, and steadily brought to my attention the surprising fact that this great Latin civilization had a way of its own, a reason for being, a rational procedure, a language and literature and life, and that my business was to shift my mental basis and bias, forget the United States, and lose myself in this new world about me.

There was a national district superintendent who again and again exclaimed, "But that's not Spanish; it's United States and we are not

thinking in terms of North America." There was a native translator, a brilliant man, who tactfully and faithfully pointed out my glaring gringo-isms and led me slowly, very slowly I admit, toward a sympathetic submergence of former ideals in the life-spirit of a great people, whom I had known only from the outside.

The enthusiastic importer of foreign ideals to any land must sooner or later come to the original discovery that this land of his adoption has its own philosophy, grown up through the ages, fitted together and adjusted and that, in a way, *it works!* Otherwise, it would not have survived. It may not work in the best possible way, but it does muddle along, and may even work better than some importation that cuts across the grain of the whole established social order. An agricultural expert was sent to a certain mission farm to take charge and teach a better way. Finding oxen yoked by the horns doing all the work on the mission and every other farm, he at once set about the introduction of horses as his first great contribution to the betterment of the situation. It was a wonderful innovation while it lasted, but no horses were broken to that sort of work, no natives knew how to handle draft horses, pandemonium broke out all over the place, and within six months all work was again being done by oxen, hitched by the horns—and



there was peace on earth once more. The oxen really did get the work done and a satisfactory crop resulted. When a man has done a thing in a certain way all his life, and that way fits his whole social situation it is well to think the problem through before upsetting the institution with methods that happen to work well somewhere else.

The missionary will find in every land established substitutes for his own ways of doing things. There has been so much said and published regarding the vast benefits of the new economic, industrial, educational methods imported by the missionary that a general idea prevails that a man from the United States can go into any land and teach the populace how to farm, print, build, paint, run machines, speed up the works and become himself the general efficiency expert of the whole situation. Sometimes something like this can be done in a primitive civilization, but much of it is vain effort in any well-developed industrial community.

The same missionary after awhile begins to suspect that a lot of our improved and super-modern way of doing things is not so radically better as he used to suppose. We improve methods so as to save time, so as to devise better methods, so as to gain more time, so as to hurry on to something else. We hasten and struggle



to bring to these more slowly moving peoples swifter ways of working, doing much, that often is not much when it is done. Often we wear out our own nerves, till, when the hour for council and conference comes, we have nothing to set before them and they wonder just what we are really trying to do.

In the final result our work and methods must be taken in their totality. "All things together work," said Paul, and the missionaries' product must be judged by its ultimate working, not its passing effects on some chance pupil. The final test is not in little improvements in the details and externals of daily life here and there, the cleaner platters and the deeper cups, but in the final uplift of human life that comes from its inner relation to Him who is the Bread of heaven. Every civilization has a certain completeness about it, but what is its final register in human life and character? Do the civilizations of images and wooden saints and incense and a commercially organized purgatory produce the results in character and contentment and well-being that in the long run come to the people who accept Christ and follow him?

It is a fearful thing to invade another man's personality and demand that he eschew his deepest convictions and adopt those that I offer him. There is a certain inevitable presumption in

offering to any man Jesus Christ, as if we held the copyrights and were authorized to give or withhold at will! Precisely this is the assumption of the Roman priest with his monopoly of spiritual benefits. There is but one possible justification for our offer of Christ and that is that he has done something for us that we find no one else able to do, and we feel that it is vitally important that other men come to this same knowledge of him.

If our case rests upon our superior civilization, we are lost before we begin. If we depend upon our own personal skill, we may find people more able than we are. If we expect that our English language will get us in and keep us there, we are due for a rude awakening. Any other attitude than that of a humble learner, seeking to find and accept the good in all people and institutions, will only put us at cross purposes with the already unified civilizations to which we go.

But in Christ we do find a supreme motive that does in practice detect and assimilate the best in every man and race, and he who comes in the name and spirit of Christ will find his own horizon steadily pushed back to include new vistas of truth and depths of experience.

One hospital matron, who had suffered from the high-pressure type of ill-considered evangel-

ism as applied to persons seriously ill, exclaimed: "Why in the world do you want to attack them when they are down and helpless? At least give them a fair chance to defend themselves." Obviously, her ideas were colored by unfortunate experiences. For all valid evangelism there is but one sufficient motive and that is Christ.

In long years of wide travel, close study of social institutions, and constant effort to put oneself in the other man's place and look through his eyes, there would come an inevitable, hopeless confusion as to the final outcome of it all if it were not for just one consideration, and that consideration is Christ. In him all lines converge, all methods meet, all races blend, all life comes to rich and rational meaning, and human hearts reach a mutual understanding.

Whatever other qualifications a missionary may bring to his task, there will always be a something lacking, a clang of sounding brass, unless he brings also as the dominant note of his approach to his work the mind that was in Christ. But just here we encounter danger of reverting to a form of cant. We may cry "Lord, Lord," without presenting Christ in any effective way. Either Christ means to us certain moral principles and spiritual ideals, a definite

ethical basis of conduct, a clear revelation of things divine, or we are mouthing an empty name. Above all else, Christ is Personality but personality is known and revealed by definable traits of character and content of teaching.

Who, then, is to define for us the personality of this Christ and who shall describe the meaning and implications of his message? Wherein is the missionary better than the mumbling priest? There is but one answer. Every man who has come to know Christ for himself, who has attained his own unique and original experience of Christ, will continue to use every available means to find his way daily to the inner sanctuary and receive there the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Bearing about in his life this Light of men, he will shed abroad a welcome illumination upon the pathway of men who long have stumbled in the dark. "They looked unto him and were radiant."

"But, this way confusion?" Doubtless we shall not all exactly agree in every detail of our understanding of Christ and proclamation of his message to men, but in the main there are two roads, and two only, open to us. Either there is for every man his own living experience of Christ, or we are left to the old iron collar of prescribed authority. The missionary who will

be a good minister of Jesus Christ will leave no stone unturned, no study unpursued that may in any measure bring to him a little clearer knowledge of Christ. The chief devotional objective of the ambassador for Christ will be his effort to find for himself that matchless mind and to know its ultimate meaning for his own life; to realize as best he can that ultimate Reality of which the mystics have ever talked so much and told us so little.

Doubtless there are those who will insist that there is lacking here the dominant note of a doctrinal statement regarding the person of Christ. Even so. But if men once come intimately to know Christ and become like him and do his will and works, are we to suppose that they will go very far astray in their theological speculations? And will defence of any doctrinal position whatever take the place of the mind and character and spirit of Christ in his followers? What we need is not so much to know historical facts about Christ nor to believe certain accepted dogmas concerning him, but to know him by that inner consciousness of Reality that comes only to those who have believed on his name and found him precious.

## CHAPTER V

## ADVENTURING WITH CHRIST

HE who is looking for a safe and sane calling had better avoid missionary service in Latin America. The whole enterprise is a risk and experiment; one never knows what the outcome is to be. With the best of intentions and effort, failure may result. Going into all the world in His name is like setting out to develop Shasta daisies or spineless cactus. You know your intention but you do not know how your experiments are going to turn out. Going about in the name of the Lord Jesus to produce transformed character is not a mathematical procedure.

This thesis has peculiar meaning in lands where state churches have eliminated all risk, and offer, for a price, a guaranteed result. Everything is settled, prescribed, arranged, insured against loss. Doctrines are fixed in form and content. There is no place for original thinking or free discussion. One accepts authority, believes what is prescribed, and the deed is done. Authority is absolute and infallible. Ceremonies are settled and are performed for the most part by professionals who do them



better than poor amateurs like us could hope to imitate. Penances are accurately weighed as to relative values and scientifically adjusted to fit the various graded offenses. No matter what the need or emergency, all is fixed and finished. The priests' book of moral instructions provides against every possible problem that may perchance arise in dealing with the common run of mortal men.

It is a wonderfully convenient system, perhaps the most satisfying on earth—for the closed mind. It has, to be sure, one serious defect, and that is the blight of mind and soul that descends upon those who surrender the right of private judgment and abandon the leadership of Christ for that of priest and prayer book.

He who goes out to walk in the steps of Christ in these lands faces a great adventure, but an adventure with Christ. Nowhere do we find him promising to his followers, then or now, regular meals, good beds, assured safety, certain shelter, unfailing friends, dependable wages. No matter how earnestly and faithfully we give ourselves to him and his service there is no assurance of a good old age, nor even that we may live through the day. No one can know that the wicked will not flourish, and the agent of the hierarchy may prosper exceedingly and win a vast following while the follower of Christ



struggles along with small returns in his humble hut beside the great cathedral.

Jesus made very plain to his disciples what they were to expect. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "Men shall revile you." "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup." The world's saviours have been its martyrs and in Christ the Old Testament hope of material rewards for godliness comes to an end. Serving God for gain was not a characteristic of the men who went out after Pentecost and staked their all on their belief that Christ had risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.

Which is to say that faith, faith in Christ, is not a sure thing, as the world giveth assurances. It is exceedingly important in an age of unprecedented luxury and well-being that this sacrificial trait of Christ-following be put in its own place. Faith in Christ is life's greatest adventure, its boldest risk. "Faith is following up your best clues." "Faith," said Donald Hankey, "is betting your life that there is a God." Faith is conviction of the unseen and unseeable. Faith is what we step out on in the dark, the evidence, within our own consciousness, of things not seen.

How very risky may be this enterprise with Christ is perfectly understood by every man who has waited with uneasy heart in the ante-room of a high official in a foreign land, not knowing what might be the outcome of an interview on which depended the success or failure of some strategic plans. To undertake any new measure, organize a new project, open a new school, venture into a new community is always an uncertain procedure. And trying to remake characters that somehow evade and defy us is anything but sure in the outcome.

The whole New Testament becomes a handbook of the life that takes risks, trusts God and goes ahead not knowing what will be the result. We preachers have cheapened the appeal when we sometimes have invited men to stand up or lift a hand, just a little way, because there was really no risk. It was just as easy, if we would only trust in Jesus all would be well, with a certain glorious outcome at the end. Candidate-seeking missionaries themselves have sometimes minimized the dangers and inconveniences and risks and have persuaded the unwary that missionary service was an assured life of interesting travel, curious incidents, and safe outcome.

The pioneers and explorers and foundation-builders have always been men of heroic stuff.

Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went, but with a very definite purpose in mind, which is precisely why any missionary ever goes anywhere. "Fight the good fight of faith," "Lay hold on eternal life," "Run with patience the race that is set before us," but when a man runs a race it is by no means certain in advance that he is going to win first place, or even honorable mention. For every missionary whose name has appeared on first pages, for every Livingstone and Carey and Taylor and Bashford and Dan Crawford, a thousand other earnest, faithful and effective men and women have gone out and done the work and come home and little fuss has been made about it by anybody.

There are plenty of examples of this sort of risk-taking. A pastor of a large and influential city church heard a come-over-and-help-us call from a weak little mission field, and forsaking his prominent parish, comfortable home, and salary went out, not knowing whether he should be able to get results in a foreign land that would in any sense justify his leaving an assured situation. A young business man in a South American country with a good position and every opportunity for advancement and large returns heard the call and gave his life to the ministry on a pittance that hardly kept soul and body together, and in that land, as in most mis-

sion lands, there were and are no possible large churches with good parsonages and comfortable livings. It was a literal going out in the dark, a supreme act of faith in Christ. And his name is legion.

The missionary of the highest type makes his life one sublime act of trust in Christ and rests the whole case on him, and him alone. He "wants no other argument; he asks no other plea," but burns his bridges behind him and takes up the lonely trail that leads into the unexplored wilderness of human life as he finds it. It is just this factor that keeps alive the various "faith missions," that make boast of depending on God and often speak with contempt of Mission Boards and organized agencies. That their logic is bad, their judgment sometimes worse, and their money-raising methods ingenious does not detract from the glorious sense of high adventure that sends them out and sometimes keeps them there through long years of hardship and scant resources. Whatever we may think of their sophistries, it is real adventure that holds them to the task.

There is something down in our hearts that lives on uncertainty. When risk has yielded to prescribed routine and we know just what is coming, hope dies, courage weakens, and the interest and zest of life fade. When sacrifice

ceases, life goes stale, the fire dies on the hearth of former enthusiasms and worthy undertakings. Here and there are such tragedies, men who have lost their soul's passion, ceased to take risks, settled down to the drab monotony of the treadmill round, while they wait the inevitable end; a matter of form, they are dead already.

The precise hardships of the pioneer missionaries have changed form and character but the element of adventure remains. It would be well to discover some test for ascertaining the adventure-taking capacity of the candidates who appear before examining committees. Possibly the most of them would pass with good credits; lacking courage, they would never have presented themselves. In practice, most missionaries are good risk-takers and attain worthy results in their adventurings for Christ.

What about the backers of these candidates? Is the Church of God to lose its capacity for taking risks in the name of Christ? Every candidate sent out is a risk to the senders and the spirit of adventure is well distributed over the whole enterprise. "I would be glad to assume the support of a student in your Theological Seminary," said a prosperous member of a home church, "provided I could be certain how he would turn out later on. I want to pick a winner." Exactly so, but exactly here is where

we all stand together. Probably there are young women who would be quite willing, other things being equal, to marry a future senator or governor or President of the United States. So far, no one has devised a way of picking in advance these outstanding citizens, and there is usually a considerable risk involved in marrying anybody at all.

When we discover on the part of the churches in the United States a generous expression of this same spirit of adventure, this same willingness to back with a small part of our means the enterprise into which the missionary puts his training and time and energy and life itself, then we shall see a new readiness to stake all on the issue and in the name of Christ go out into the uncertain and unknown and stand by the outcome.

Doctor Smith (that is not his name) had risen by unusual skill as a surgeon to high position in his profession. His practice grew until an income of thirty thousand dollars a year came from his grateful patients. It was good and profitable practice and he could have kept it up for life. But years ago a student volunteer call had awakened in his heart a sense of responsibility for the men who have had no chance in life, and the time came when he and his wife turned their backs upon all and went out, know-



ing little enough about whither they went, but they went to a struggling mission hospital in a far land and found it deep in debt and about to expire. On a missionary salary of one twentieth of what he had earned at home they began to build, and what they built reached out until vast populations were feeling the results of that risk taken in the name of Christ. Doors were opened, influences released, lives changed, and a new spirit energized in the name of Christian service. This doctor told me one day, as a joke on himself, that his missionary salary just paid his dues as a member of the American College of Surgeons and other organizations to which his high standing in the United States had admitted him. Yes, it was a great adventure and the results of it were profound and far-reaching. But it might have been otherwise, and it is just this contingency that links all adventure with reality.



## CHAPTER VI

## DOWN THROUGH THE NIGHT

It is not easy for heirs of the long evangelical struggle up out of superstition and intolerance to detect at first approach the moral shadows that linger in the background of Latin life. Said a prominent scholar of South America: "You of the north little realize our position. With you religion and morality are associated, with us they are divorced and the worst enemies of our homes are sometimes our self-appointed religious teachers."

So black is the story of conditions in the more remote regions of the continent that the returned traveler usually refrains from mentioning what he knows, fearing that human incredulity will reject the story and repudiate its bearer. Distressing beyond measure is that deadly "gloom of the unlighted mind." I have attended Indian festivals of the upper Andes and have seen and listened the night through to the weird wail of the Indian flute, and the hour after hour of monotonous jigging to music. All night and all day and all night the celebration continues till the gutters are lined with drunken Indians,

the liquor usually being sold "for the glory of God and the honor of the saints."

This prevailing note of gloom registers everywhere. I have entered hundreds of churches, principally to study the people there, and have yet to find a face that indicated peace or joy in believing. It may be said that these devotees brought their broken hearts with them to the church. Undoubtedly they did, and—more's the tragedy—they carried them away again without dropping a burden at His feet or bearing a song away.

They have a Christ, of a sort, in these temples. To be appreciated that "Christ" must be seen. An image of carved wood, usually life-size, almost naked, bloody, bruised, repulsive, hanging on a cross or stretched in a coffin, such is the only Christ that most of them know. Is it any wonder that they prefer the pleasant and comely Mary and the well-dressed saints?

The most attractive image in any church is always the Virgin Mary. She is given as beautiful a face as the artisan can produce; always she is dressed in rich robes and often decorated with costly jewels. Frequently she is artistically arrayed amid clouds of filmy drapery, with attendant and adoring angels, everywhere she is the center of attraction, the theme of preaching and object of worship. It is easy to understand

why Mary is exalted. Her cult is the creation of priestcraft, is controlled by its creators and there is profit in the trade, and to the oppressed and lonely, Mary, the Mother of God, is motherhood raised to divine levels, sympathetic, understandably appealing. Every oppressed mother in this man-made civilization sees her lowly estate highly exalted in the glorious queen of heaven. No wonder they follow her. But Christ is another matter, a bruised and broken spectacle to move one to grief and crushing despair. Is it any wonder that in these lands Christ has not come into his own? The hideous "mummies" in the crypt of the cemetery at Guana juato are no more repulsive than these ghastly caricatures of the Saviour of mankind.

This religion is not all gruesome of course. There are lighter touches: the happy saint days, the cheerful processions, the first communions, the blessing of the animals who carry about the pink paint for days as evidence of their master's devotion.

But even the saints' days bring burdens. I have seen perspiring men staggering down the street under the ton weight of a platform bearing a gilded virgin and other "people," all heavy enough to overload a truck. They were doing "church work."

To see in stone and mortar what these

worthies were trying to do, one should visit Cholulu's Holy Hill in Mexico, near Puebla. Here stood the ancient temple of a by-gone race in the midst of a populous city. Cortez came and destroyed the temple, tumbled the "heathen" images down the hill, and "purified" the place. A church was built, a virgin installed, and the faithful gathered to do honor to the new shrine.

Evidently, the virgin was pleased with all this, for she eventually commanded that a church should be built on every street intersection, and in time they came near doing it. Cholulu faded away before the growing modern city of Puebla, but Cholulu's churches still stand. I walked about the parapet of the hill and counted up to one hundred, without the aid of a glass. Scattered all over the landscape they stand by the score, in deserted fields, amid the corn and the beans, in little nooks by the streams, on every hilltop, churches of stone and tile, old and gray and strong and beautiful. All but a bare handful of them are empty and deserted by any but the bats and owls, but they will stand for a thousand years if the vandals let them alone that long. One may easily lose consciousness of time and place, wandering in speculative fancy over the fields in the days when a hundred thousand souls toiled to build these temples, but built nothing else that remains to mark the pass-

ing of a civilization whose chief value lay in its power to produce gold for the conquerors without toil on their own part.

It is not everywhere alike, however. A certain Protestant missionary, having become a personal friend of the president of one of these republics, was invited to accompany the chief executive on the day of his annual attendance upon mass. The missionary hesitated, but decided that in his place Christ would probably have gone with the president on his one religious excursion of the year. The mass was said in a small chapel on a private estate with none present but the missionary and his distinguished friend. That is, none were present except the officiating priest, and a government band outside the door which vigorously played jazz music through the ceremony. There were also a couple of employees who kept going a barrage of firecrackers.

Perhaps a good way to state the primitive background of the whole situation, as it exists off the beaten track, will be to tell a story of personal experience in the Isthmus of Panama.

History has it that the first town founded on the mainland by the discoverers of the New World back in 1519 was Old Panama, and that during the following year, the town of Nata in the province of Cocle came into existence. Old

Panama was destroyed by the Morgan Pirates, leaving Nata, the oldest town continuously inhabited, to the present time. This situation would seem to merit a visit, and on a jungle trip I drew near one day to Nata and found a town of some fair streets and a few good houses. Armed with an official letter to the Alcalde (mayor) I sought him out and asked questions, with small result. He was friendly enough, but short on information. He did not know the age of the town, the number of people, nor much else.

Looking for enlightenment, I found the priest in his house next to the big stone church. It was a poor enough house, and an Italian came to the door and listened to my statement that I was an American traveling through the country and had dropped in for a few moments' chat. This approach brought instant and hearty welcome and I was offered the best seat in the house. The "family" seemed to be at home. A couple of tame deer, a sheep, several dogs, cats, chickens and a small pig shared the quarters on good terms. Part of the floor was of boards, the rest of earth. It was a humble setting for the principal man of the place.

The priest proved to be an intelligent man, of evident good heart, and we soon fell into conversational stride and talked intimately of many



matters. He spoke some English, had served a church on the Canal Zone at one time, had visited the United States and confessed that it was a lonely life, far from congenial comradeship. My heart warmed to him as we talked and I again began my absurd Yankee quest for information.

"Can you tell me how old this town is, Father?"

"Yes; it was founded by the last exploring expedition of Columbus in the year 1520, one year after the establishment of Old Panama."

"That makes Nata the oldest town on the mainland."

"Yes, and it has had a continuous history until now, your visit."

"How many people live here?"

"About fifteen hundred in the town, and, of course, many more in the district around about."

"How are health conditions now?"

"Pretty good in the dry season, but in the time of rains, it is bad. Everybody is sick: malaria, chills, fevers—everything. There is no doctor nearer than Penonomé, twenty miles away, and when it rains there is no road. Sometimes a rich man sends for the doctor, but no one has money for such extravagance now."

"But, Father, what do these people do when they fall ill?"



"What do they do? They go down to the Chinese shop and tell the *Chino* about their pains, and buy some pills or powders or something and go home and take it."

"And then what?"

"And then what? Why either they get better or they get worse."

"Well, well; come to think of it, that is more or less what happens elsewhere under the same circumstances. But how are business conditions?"

"Business, did you say? Business? Well, now, there simply is no business. The people are too lazy to work and too tired to make an effort. There is no money in the country. They are a hopeless lot of good-for-nothings. Why, I don't even take up a collection in the church any more."

I was interested. "Why don't you take up the collection any more?"

"What's the use? Fifteen cents, Mex. [Seven and one-half cents.] That's all I get."

"But surely you get something from the church. What about baptisms; is there no pay for them?"

"Yes, but only fifty cents apiece. Last year I baptized three hundred and thirty-five babies. You can't live on three hundred and thirty-five babies at fifty cents per baby."

"Surely not. But don't you get something for funerals?"

"Two dollars and a half each. Why, man, you know, you can't give a good funeral for two dollars and a half!"

"I really have never thought of funerals from that standpoint, but I suppose there may be something in it."

And then, without any suspicion of what was going to happen, I stepped on a bomb and it exploded. I asked, "What about weddings? Don't you get something for them?"

"Weddings, man; weddings, it is?" he fairly shouted. "Weddings, did you say? Where do you think you are anyway? Weddings," he groaned. "Why, my friend, there are no weddings. Last year three hundred and thirty-five baptisms and three weddings. Nobody's married here. Ninety-five per cent of these people are living in open concubinage. They are just plain hopeless."

"But, Father, I suppose that these people are human like others, and it should be possible to do something about it. Why don't you make a campaign and preach about it and talk with them and offer to marry them for nothing within a given time and get this matter straightened up? Surely, you could do something."

"Fiddlesticks! The more you give them for

nothing, the less they appreciate it. I did offer to marry them and nobody came. They are too bad to be worth saving."

It seemed time to change the subject. "How old did you say the town is, Father?"

"It will be four hundred years next year since it was founded."

"And the church was established the same year, and has been here ever since?"

"Yes, that is true."

"And by the way, Father, have you ever had any Protestants here?"

"No, thank God; they have been delivered from that scourge; whatever other troubles have come, at least there have been no Protestants to corrupt the people."

The afternoon was wearing on and I arose to go. My host sincerely besought me to abide with him for the night, but I declined. I was behind on my schedule and must be on the way. Where was I intending to spend the night? I really did not know; had he any suggestions? He had, good ones. Two hours from Nata, on the main road, I would cross a river, and a half mile beyond would come upon a fine grove of mango trees and under the trees a little white house, and in the house lived a devout widow, owner of a great estate. Religious and hospitable was she and would be glad to have us camp under

the trees for the night. This was good news and as I left I explained that I was not a Catholic but a Protestant and did not wish to travel under false colors.

"That's all right, that's all right," he exclaimed. "Any time you come this way you are more than welcome to stay with me."

In due time my Panamanian traveling companion and I came to the river, the mango grove and the little white house. And there was the old lady busy about her plantation affairs. I explained the case and she promptly insisted that not under the trees but on her front porch we should set up our cots and spend the night. And by the time the horses were cared for she had a good supper ready. After supper we talked of many matters, her farm and her sick grandchild in Panama, and finally we got around to the people who worked on her farm. One hundred and fifty of them there were, she said, and about the worst, most degraded, good-for-nothing lot of human derelicts the sun ever shone on. The language began to have a familiar sound; that was what the priest had said. It seemed that after pay days, it needed a week to get the crew back into condition to do any useful work. Had she tried to better the situation? Yes, she had and that with right good will. She had cut down their pay, and had even beaten some of

them but that made her arms lame and had to be discontinued.

"But, Mother," I persisted, "could not something be done? These are after all human beings, and that means that there is always the hope of betterment. Could not the consolations and inspiration of religion avail something?"

"Well, now, you know, I tried that too. I had the priest come out here and I got them all together under the mango trees and the Father said mass and sprinkled holy water all over them and it didn't do a bit of good. They are wholly hopeless. Nothing can be done. They are no better than animals."

In the morning she gave us a good breakfast. I committed the social error of offering to pay for our hospitality, begged forgiveness for my blunder, shook hands and departed, never to see the good soul again.

She was a devout and earnest woman, who according to her light was deeply grieved over the moral conditions of the people about her. And likewise the priest of Nata was by no means a bad man; he too was groaning under the sins of his people. The trouble was that in four hundred years of continuous occupation, their system had produced no better fruits than those which they described so bitterly in my hearing.

Such is the situation over large areas of

Latin America, where reliable vital statistics returned by the priests themselves give an illegitimacy ranging from fifty to ninety-five per cent.

Is there any need of a living Christ here? Should he walk in physical presence into these churches, would he not strip from the walls those gruesome images and stand again with outstretched hands and cry, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"?

## CHAPTER VII

## CHRIST IS ARISEN IN LATIN LIFE

AN intellectual leader of South America was telling his experience in the course of a lecture before a group of men. He was related to no church and frankly knew very little about Protestant churches of any sort. He was the author of a book on the social application of Christianity, a work based on first principles and personal observations rather than on research or the comparative findings of other scholars. How had he himself come to personal relations with this Christ of whom he spoke?

Of institutional Christianity he had had more than enough in the superstitions and intellectual blight that he had known from childhood. Masses, incense, images, prescribed beliefs, prohibited thinking for oneself had brought him no satisfaction of mind nor heart. Steadily he began to push out his way against the barriers of intolerance and reaction and to find an inner assurance that it was safe to discard the inflexible prescriptions and reach out after God in his own way. Slowly he began to find a way that led to clearer light.

With all this there was a haunting sense of



something ahead not yet attained, that drew him steadily onward. Rest for the mind he sought in a new philosophy of life and God and man and the universe. Faith began to be, not an iron band about the imprisoned mind, but a glorious adventure, a seeking after God. Here at last was life and hope with something not far away that would yet answer his questions and give rest to his heart.

So matters went on until there came a day before Easter, and during the night that followed he found himself one of a throng in a Greek church, witnessing the stately ceremonies that precede the resurrection day. Chants, processions, prayers, shadows, and pageantry wore away the hours, none of it meaning very much to the visitor. About three o'clock in the morning, the lights burst forth, the black curtains and robes fell away and in one great chant of triumph, choir and multitude broke forth in the shout of victory, "Christ is risen, Christ is risen!" It was dramatic in extreme, but it was not the color nor light nor drama that suddenly struck through the soul of this earnest seeker. It was a something deeper and more sublime, a sudden new sense that Christ had arisen in himself, that Christ in living, actual, divine presence was with and in him; the resurrection had taken place in his own heart, and then and there

this man knew for himself what he had come to accept as a reasoned dogma. "Christ is risen in me."

There are two expressions of Christian progress in Latin life, and just now we are apt to hear a good deal of the high values of indirect propaganda methods that register, not in church membership nor Sunday-school attendance nor in any tangible evidences whatsoever, but in that gradual change of ideals and moral sanctions by which we may hope to "change the climate" of life and ultimately influence the whole social situation. Possibly in the long run this process will register high values and far-reaching results, but in order to appreciate these values it is unnecessary to deprecate the direct evangelistic approach and decry the steady plodding of the organized churches and their toiling pastors. There is urgent need for some organized expression of faith and service to which the ideals and motives of the Christian mission schools and indirect social influences may be directly related.

Vast totals of character results are dissipated in the social life of home towns and old environments and lost to all worthy attainment or vital expression, because of the inadequate equipment of churches and chapels in which our evangelistic work is housed, over much of Latin America.

There is in a general way an advent of the spirit of Christ in Latin life. New ideals, more closely akin to the teachings of the Gospels, are stirring the hearts of men. New aspirations, more unselfish and Christlike, are appearing in our schools, in the Y. M. C. A., and, in a general way, in the awakening and expanding life of the day. Outside of any organized expression of faith is a wakening spirit in the life of the age. Intelligent men are saying that if there is to be any higher standard of moral values it must come from without the sacerdotal form of organized Christianity. The work of the Young Men's Christian Association and its sister organization is contributing much to this end. These institutions do not make direct contacts with organized churches, nor do their members often attend or take part in Christian activities other than their own work. "We are neither Protestant nor Catholic, we are Christian," they sometimes say. Certainly, this work tends to break up the soil and let in the light and is of high worth in any land. There is room for question as to the final values of a work that does not bring its converts, if such they may be called, into fellowship with organized forms of faith, and is apt to register more as a change of intellectual attitude rather than a transforming inner experience.

Christ is rising in new spiritual motives that register in nearly every human activity. Men are forgetting the forms and finding the personality of Him who knocks for admittance at the secret doors of life. The images and shadows and saints and substitutes that in the institutionalized Christianity of the past have relegated Christ to the ghastly image of thorns and blood are being swept away. Some men are beginning to seek in living reality foundations for a new faith and they are compelled to turn to Christ for power to motivate and renew the deepest interests and aspirations of life. It is notable that much of the religious teaching of the Y. M. C. A. is devoted to the study of the life and person of Christ. When men for the first time come face to face with him as a living Reality, a spiritual Presence in a world of actuality, there comes an awakening shock and a consequent personal readjustment toward the problems of human life.

All this new orientation is to the good and sooner or later will work far-reaching transformations in character and social institutions. There is sometimes a very real danger that we may leave Christ to the general influences and atmosphere by which in some indefinite way we hope to change the social attitude. If we are to achieve the new and living hope and make Christ

dynamic in life, we must find some individuals in whom Christ is risen indeed in newness of life and these people should be related to some organized and propagandist form of the Christian Church. While we are slowly freshening the sea, it is needful to keep a few ponds of living water filled from the flowing fountains of fresh and vital experience. From these sources healing streams may flow outward and create oases in the desert.

Which is to say that at last it all comes to an individual matter. If Christ is to transform life, it will be because he has first changed and energized enough persons to represent him in all human activities.

We are in danger of allowing certain useful auxiliaries to become substitutes for this personal experience in Christ, and sometimes it is possible to mistake a result of his Presence for a means of regeneration. They have a practical sound—the social clubs, the good examples, the silent influences, the marching children, the ethical discussions, the intellectual debates. Good they are, every one; the more of them the better, but their highest good depends much on a definite spiritual motive power in the heart of the leaders. Here and there are outstanding personalities that have been born again into new spiritual consciousness, and other people about

them, without realizing clearly what has happened, are moved to seek a similar experience for themselves. The outstanding need of missionary and national leaders of the evangelical church in Latin America is for a "new and original experience of Jesus Christ," a sharing of the testimony of Paul, "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me." Such revelation may come at three o'clock on Easter morning or at any other time; but if it be a clear vision of Christ, it will register in transformed life.

Where men break away from established traditions and set forth on the venture of faith, individual variations in creed, conduct, and experience are sure to follow. Must we, then, in Latin America choose between dead uniformity and hopeless confusion? Not at all. In Christ we have already attained unity of heart and purpose and an interdenominational fellowship and co-operation in advance of anything found in the United States.

The way out of this potential confusion is not by prescribed authority nor by uniformity of name or method or plan, but by the unifying power of a transforming experience in Christ. We finally test our plans and creeds and motives by him, and him alone. In some places denominational differences have sowed dissension, but where we have dropped our historical contro-



versies and come together in Christ we have found common ground of faith and works. Otherwise the people of these lands are doomed to wander as sheep in the wilderness of intolerance, superstition, and commercialized ecclesiasticism.

This truth sometimes attains recognition in unexpected places. When the last Eucharistic Congress met in Chile, a discussion hour was held and at one session the following question was presented: "How are we to account for the high success of the evangelicals in this country?" Various answers were suggested, but the discussion closed with a statement from the most progressive Catholic bishop present. "There are three reasons," he said, "for this success. First, they preach and practice total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors. Second, they read their Bibles. Third, their pastors are good men of high moral character and not renegades, as some of our priests are. These three traits would insure the success of any cause." The outstanding power of the Protestants was finally related to the Christlikeness of their spiritual leaders.

In numerous spheres of interest and activity there is a slowly advancing recognition of the person of Christ as the one perfect norm of human life. Men are increasingly asking what



Jesus would do in their own places. Thinking men view with bewildered distress the oppression of the Indian by the priests, the sale of benefits for what the traffic will bear, the stones of tradition for the bread of truth, empty forms in place of living faith and personal experience, the vast wealth of the church in the name of Him who had not where to lay his head, the delinquencies of the celibate priesthood, the traffic in images and relics and "miracles," the worship of imaginary saints and numberless virgins, the horrible wooden Christs, and are disposed to sever all personal relations with such a system. That more of them do not cry aloud is due largely to the fact that their wives are often devout worshipers at the shrines which the men despise and whatsoever a man hath, that will he give for peace in his own family. But there are earnest men, and women too, ready to repudiate all this and turn to Him who arose from the grave and proclaimed all power in heaven and earth.

The largely negative features of this gradual approach are partly due to the fact that we have dealt principally with the humbler folk, and have never been able to provide equipment suitable to the needs of the better-educated people. But they are more receptive every year, and the doors are open everywhere.

## CHAPTER VIII

## THOSE WHO HEAR HIM GLADLY

POSSIBLY there is no land where the common people respond more readily and sincerely to the presentation of a living Christ than in Latin America. Once the iron hand of the hierarchy is relaxed, there will be a turning unto the Lord. In spite of the opposition and difficulties the new convert has to face, the results of evangelistic work have been notably satisfactory.

The people of the common lot reveal everywhere capacity for rapid progress when they have a fair chance. Their very humility makes them open to suggestion, and if those of the lowest social strata move at all, it must be upward. When a man lives in a mud hut ten feet square and tries to raise a family therein without benefit of clergy, schools, newspapers, social fellowship or any other window into life, there is no danger of degrading him; he is at the bottom now.

We justly repudiate the idea that men are sent to perdition because they have never heard the name of Christ, but for the victims of South American slums hell has no terrors, they are living there now.

This man at the bottom shows some surprising qualities of mind and heart. Be his hovel ever so wretched, this *roto* ("broken one"), or peon, has always a few flowers growing about the place. Bathless he may be for scarcity of water, but he will carry, from whatever distance, water enough to keep alive a few geraniums or nasturtiums before his door. Scattered about the good houses of the big estates, whether the owners live there or, more likely, in the capital city, are these miserable huts and shacks and dumps where human beings maintain an existence but little above that of the domestic animals with which they work, and together with which they have been considered as personal property through the centuries of the Spanish colonial regime.

But this is the lowest stratum. It has happened more than once that by some whirl of chance a child from this level has found his way to school, and under the stimulus of new ideas and surroundings, a dormant mind has awakened like a sunflower in June and the peon's boy has become a man! Talk about miracles! It is all miracle.

Not all of them live thus. There is a slowly increasing middle class of artisans, mechanics, clerks, shopkeepers, policemen, and teachers of primary schools, who live in somewhat better

surroundings, varying from the better one-room *conventillas* of Chile and elsewhere to the fairly good two- and three-room apartments and small *patio* houses of the better-to-do. Some of the greatest leaders of Latin life have come from these humble homes of poor people. Benito Juarez, full-blooded Mexican Indian, was a type of many men who to-day are giving their talents to the bettering of social conditions and the lifting up of the down-trodden day laborer.

One of the most revolutionary social movements in Latin America since the end of the World War is the awakening of labor to class consciousness and the widespread organized demand for a fair share in the products of their toil. The days of dumb, driven slavery are past for these awakening populations. Literacy has steadily risen since the one per cent of a century ago to the more or less thirty per cent that can now give some account of the three Rs. Skilled mechanics form intelligent units in an organized labor that under one name or another reaches from the north of Mexico to the Straits of Magellan. The distressed traveler has too-frequent evidence of the up-to-date features of the situation in these southern countries. Frequent lock-outs, strikes, and labor quarrels upset street traffic, dock operations, and public utilities generally. There are some who openly

sigh for the good old days when a man did as he was told or had his head knocked off. It was good going then for the man on top, but those days are gone and gone literally for good. Some turbulence and trouble there will be, but these are the disturbances incidental to new social emergence to a larger and better life. How far-reaching may yet be this force of organized labor we have hardly begun to realize, but we may get a hint from the fact that in several South American countries labor unions have turned the tide in more than one political struggle. The Mexican Federation of Labor (*Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana*) elected the Calles government and held the people steady in the struggle between church and state in 1926.

Highly significant is the phenomenon of organized labor and organized university students joining hands in common cause for the maintenance of free speech and religious tolerance. In Peru, when the Eucharistic Congress met and a form of concordat was secretly proposed between the republic and the Vatican, it was the university students and organized labor together that made impossible the realization of the project. In Chile, when Catholic authorities broke up the furniture and closed the meeting place of the students' forum for the discussion of public questions, labor unions and

students marched the streets together bearing banners with the inscription, "Patriotism without pillage."

These are the people who hear Jesus gladly, provided we can present him in terms that reveal him as he is and not in the conventional sacerdotal disguise. There are those who will follow him, if they can once come to know him. For instance, in a distant interior province of one of these countries stands a small village surrounded by populous farming country. An aged and devout woman here had a nephew in another town who occasionally visited his aunt and took occasion to tell of the peace and comfort he had found in believing. The old lady became interested; in her life of eighty-five years she had received no such benefits from her penances and confessions. Presently came that way a missionary and we held one day a meeting in the old lady's house and "everybody" came and there was much enthusiasm over the new way. A Sunday school was organized and flourished until one Sunday afternoon came a band of a hundred men, who, armed with guns and clubs, and inflamed by liquor and led by the priest, raided the place, drove the people out of the house, terrorized the children, and rode away breathing out threatenings and slaughter upon all such heretics.



Possibly these simple people should have withstood this onslaught and shown themselves Christian martyrs then and there. As a matter of record, they did not do so and after a later visit from the priest the old lady confessed her apostasy, returned to the fold, and wept bitterly over the calamity that had come into her life. Were they weak-kneed and blameworthy? Let him who has never compromised his principles or silenced his profession for gain or prestige cast the first stone.

The missionary took the matter up with the governor of the province and secured an injunction against the priest. Later the Sunday school was reopened and the work proceeded, slowly but surely.

It is an axiom of the ages that the gospel nearly always begins at the bottom and lifts men from the lowest levels of life. This is no mere figure of speech; witness the leadership that has come forth from huts and cabins. There is real transformation evident wherever Christ is presented in terms of life and experience that men can understand.

An enthusiastic young woman came to a southern city and failed to find in the daily round of the schoolroom all that she came to do. To the superintendent she told her troubles and asked for some "real missionary work."



"Very well," he said. "Go down on Fifteenth Street and start a Sunday school in a hall."

The hall was secured, and the intrepid teacher went up and down the streets, knocking on doors, stopping people on the sidewalk, everywhere inviting them to come to her Sunday school. And they came—thirty, forty, sixty, ninety, one hundred and ten, one hundred and twenty—and then the storm broke and a delegation of nuns and priests swept over the field and left the following Sunday an attendance of fifteen. A broken-hearted but black-eyed and determined young woman went at it again and for months it was give and take until a fairly reliable attendance of about one hundred was secured. But only the persistent and continued visiting of the missionary and her staff of native teachers stood against the anathemas and excommunications and threats of the priests. Opposition has its benefits at times, but it hardly seems fair that any people anywhere should be compelled to face just that kind of storm in order to find their way through to Christ.

There are two results that inevitably follow the vision of Christ in any human life of lowly station. One is physical, the other intellectual. When people find Christ they invariably begin to clean up and they always reach out for something with which to feed their newly discovered

intelligence. That is to say that when the poor and illiterate discover Christ they take a bath and learn to read. The transformation of hygienic conditions resultant upon the impact of the gospel upon family life is one of the marvels of the situation. People who have been content to live like pigs suddenly begin to sweep the floor and tidy up the place and add a touch of beauty and grace. Children appear in clean aprons, and mothers with erstwhile disheveled hair now neatly in place. The man who never thought of cleaning up comes to church transformed, so far as his circumstances will permit, and a new note sings in all the house.

Closely related to this is the economic transformation for which every missionary eagerly looks. It is not meet that any man created in the image of God should try to live on one meal per day with a few informal scraps thrown in at odd times. Life was never made to be lived in the mud and on a basis of starvation of body or mind. Hence it comes to pass that here and there we find heroic efforts of far-seeing men who try to turn the economic tide and lift the level of industrial life. Most of these attempts are having hard going for natural reasons. When other farms and printers and shops are paying starvation wages and the Christian enterprise has to make its financial way by selling

its products in the open market in competition with the crops and work done on the sweat-shop basis, the Christian enterprise goes to the wall. And when the missionary farm pays about the same wages as its rivals, a reproach arises and the results have often been disappointing to the idealists who in good faith have undertaken a building without counting all the costs.

Better than these model farms or shops has been the success of a few colonizing enterprises which have placed the individual family on the soil and through various forms of educational, evangelistic and social service, have helped the family to become economically independent and socially self-respecting. One feels somehow that Christ himself must be more interested in awakening in every man the latent image of God than in developing a dangerous paternalism that may place a little more food on the table but leaves the man still a dependent upon the bounty of someone else above him in the economic scale. In Latin America we face a situation that has developed through four centuries of rigid social caste, spiritual despotism, religious exploitation, and economic serfdom. No sudden efforts of ours will change this overnight. Devise and develop the most skillful plans and helpful measures, it finally stands that the one supreme service that we can render is somehow to bring

human beings face to face with Jesus Christ and let him do his own work in the quickening of the whole man to new motives and purposes and horizons, the boundary lines of a new creation in him.

## CHAPTER IX

## SPANISH-AMERICAN CHARACTERISTICS

It has been the fashion to make an ado about the mysterious traits of Latins, Chinese, Hottentots—anybody who happens to come from somewhere else and speaks a different tongue. Bret Harte helped it along with his "Ways that are dark and tricks that are vain" of the heathen Chinese. Neither the Chinese nor the Mexican nor anybody else is any more mysterious or perplexing than we are ourselves, provided we know two or three simple things about them and provided also that we have a kindly disposition to put ourselves in their places and look at life through their eyes. All we need to know is the social history of a people, their present dominant motives and their reaction capacity to new stimuli and the mysteries fade away into the common experiences of humanity.

Of Latin American histories there are many and it is easy to trace the blood stream of the southern European through the conquerors to its attenuated part in the much-mixed racial stock of to-day. The mixing has wrought both good and evil, but on the whole the good predominates.

There are at least seven race blends in Latin America and the study of their mutations and social tendencies forms the epic of a race.

There is a Mexican near-neighbor of largely Indian blood, a steady-going, dependable Indian, capable of looking on both sides of a question and apt to stand a lot of pressure before he turns. When he does turn it is time to get out of his way, as with other phlegmatic peoples. Such traces of Spanish stock as remain in the Mexican sharpen his wits and give him a touch of aristocracy, but the general blend gives promise of a long run of social improvement.

The Central American people are a heterogeneous lot of tribes and races, with here and there, as in Costa Rica, populations of unmixed European stock, whose representatives are well aware and duly proud of their white skins.

Northern South America presents backward populations having certain definitely developed traits and offering promise of advance, with educational opportunity and economic development.

There are four civilizations of South America: the barren west coast with its mixed multitudes in touch with the northern and European world; the Upper Andes, socially as remote from everywhere as the moon, with Indian populations, stolid, oppressed, and exploited but everlastingly faithful once they find a friend; the mixed black

and white Portuguese-speaking population of Brazil, and lastly the new blend of Southern European stock that is working out in Argentina, Uruguay, and Southern Brazil a new racial brand. What the final outcome of this mixture will be no one can say, but the thrifty Italian is much in evidence and it is certain that we will yet have to reckon largely with the Argentine in the years to come.

In the background hangs the shadow of the old Spanish arrogance and contempt for manual labor. In the Mexican workman this has partly worn out and the Mexican is skillful with his hands and willing to work if he has anything like fair treatment. The Andes Indian is born to soil and toil, but the upper classes of the more developed civilizations of the south show still the brand of the aristocrat who toils not with his hands if he can find any way to avoid it; and as might be expected, is apt to be pretty helpless in a physical emergency.

In spite of all this, there is even in the Andes Indian a latent capacity for initiative, self-help, and manual skill that responds to the stimulus of industrial re-education.

As might be expected, these people are linguistic experts, though not always to the extent to which they themselves aspire. They have the "language bump" well set up to start with, but



without that they would do well anyway, from sheer practice. Anyone who talks all the time at least gets a lot of practice.

They speak and write with a fluency that amazes us of the slower-tongued, one-language United States. Our jerky and often awkward efforts to express our ideas appear crude and sometimes painful beside the polished periods of southern orators. More than once I have stumbled through a half hour of it, while the patient congregation waited until the pastor, the only man present who really knew what I was driving at, arose and preached it over after me in the language of a Latin Demosthenes. With us of the north a manuscript usually denotes inability to express oneself freely. With them a paper indicates that the writer thereof has taken his task seriously and has now something worth hearing. Anybody at all can on sixty seconds' notice deliver a polished verbal barrage, but a manuscript—that means work. “In practice they appear to do their thinking aloud, rather than express their thoughts after they have mentally prepared them,” said a veteran missionary.

The humblest of them have high capacity for dramatic expression. In a town still suffering from after-revolution effects, I came upon the pastor of a twenty-point circuit. They were expecting me and the welcome was ready. The

main attraction of the evening was "The Prodigal Son," produced under direction of the pastor. The curtain arose on a room in the father's house where two servants were discussing the relative merits and demerits of the two sons. Action followed in proper sequence, dialogue and movement had been worked out. When the prodigal came to his wretched state, live pigs added their squealing touch of realism to the far country. The "father" was an old man, converted three months before, who gave himself to his part as if his soul and body depended on the outcome, and all characters were presented with entire seriousness and well sustained throughout. It was a worthy bit of dramatization. In recitations from memory, never does a youngster forget his "piece" nor does he lose his cunning in adolescence. Dramatic instinct bubbles over on any fitting occasion.

It has sometimes been said that initiative is not a trait of the Latin, which is as incorrect as to claim that they have no sense of humor. They are not keen on our localized jokes, nor do they take up instantly our Yankee brand of initiative, but on their own ground they have a sense of humor as fine-grained as their social charm and conversational tact. Much of Spanish humor needs fumigation, but the trouble lies in the vitiated stream of Spanish life, not in the sense

of humor. Sometimes it has happened that men who have been thought difficult to get on with have merely been trying to release an initiative that the administrator failed to understand. A young fellow who had not previously given proof of unusual talents came to me one day with an elaborate plan for a small agricultural school and experimental station. Every detail was provided, so many of them that the enterprise seemed in danger of sinking beneath the trimmings. Had he any paper or stock or land for all this? He had; and he produced a subscription paper with good promises of all these things—enough for a beginning.

Given free rein they sometimes develop an initiative disastrous to team-work or co-operation. In South America there was some objection to the Epworth League on account of its difficult-to-pronounce name. Various pastors began to set up local societies, each his own creation which he carried about with him from place to place, to the confusion of the work. It was initiative at the expense of co-operation.

The most valuable testimony regarding this quality of initiative and self-help appears in the successes of the National Missionary Societies now operating in Chile, East South America, and Mexico. Out of a beginning marked principally by generous impulses and a desire to

develop something purely national in origin and administration, have come strong organizations with well defined programs and a high degree of efficiency in carrying out what is undertaken.

Whatever else the Latin may be, he is generous when his deeper emotions are touched. How liberal they are with their scant resources those who know them best fully realize. More than once, in distant villages, I have encountered new silverware on the parsonage table and knew that it had been bought or hired for the day from the local store. The humbler Mexican has a skillful way of folding his "tortilla" and using it as a substitute for all the table "tools" of civilization. Be it said that the system has high merits—there are no dishes to wash! (American husbands take notice.)

It brings a lump to one's throat to see them put everything they have at the service of the passing visitor. In their poverty it becomes literally true that "you are in your own house." Everything in it is certainly at your disposal. These expressions of hospitality often involve days and weeks of such sacrifice as we might hesitate to make were our places reversed.

There are always liberal givers to any good cause. A collection was being taken for urgently needed repairs on the church building. All were giving as best they could. A young

woman with a modest office salary wrote her slip for what appeared to be one dollar, but when she came the following week to pay her pledge, she placed one hundred dollars on the altar, saying that it seemed the only proper thing to do. It was her savings for the past year. Nor is this an isolated case.

There are country districts where very little money is in circulation and the problem of living is largely a matter of crops and barter. In more than one such situation the accounts of the treasurers of the church and Ladies' Aid Society would make interesting reading for the comfortable Christians of our own land. One Ladies' Aid treasurer reported that there was no money to collect, but that nevertheless the treasury was not empty, thanks be to God. It contained in fact a novel collection of beans, corn and rice, the tithes of the respective contributors, and also three hens, a pig, seven small chickens and twenty-seven eggs, all the Lord's portion and dedicated to his work.

The prize tithing story comes from Coquimbo in Chile, where the late Dr. G. J. Schilling at one time preached a sermon on Christian stewardship which so impressed a twelve-year-old boy that he came forward at the close of the service and announced his intention of becoming forthwith a tither. But had he an income? Not

at all, but no matter, he would go out and get one. On the following evening he reported at the parsonage with ninety cents which he offered as the first fruits of the work of the day. But how could this be? Surely he had not earned nine pesos the first day! Certainly not, but he had earned one peso, kept ten cents for himself, while here was the nine tenths for the church!

Outstanding among the good qualities of the Spanish-speaking American is his friendliness. If it is true that one can in time and with good nature talk himself out of almost any awkward situation, it is because they are a well-wishing people, sincerely ready to accommodate if any way can be found to do so. They have their weak points, even as we—a certain irresponsibility in a pinch, a disposition to take one's promise lightly, and a propensity for idealized expression without always a corresponding realization of what is so elaborately dreamed. But take them all in all, if one understands them and knows what they mean by what they say, they are as comfortable people to get on with as any in the world. Treat them as equals, with a touch of *simpatico*, and they will respond one hundred per cent.

Everywhere one meets an innate social refinement. American brusqueness does not always discover this trait at first approach, but the fault



is usually on our side. Treat an educated Latin as an inferior being who needs to wake up to our assumed superiority and he is apt to turn sour and become difficult. But exercise a little consideration and courtesy and you may stop any high-hatted gentleman on the street and ask your way and you will receive faultless consideration. And the wayside beggar will be equally courteous.

Two carloads of American teachers went to Mexico to see the country and attend the university summer school. At the northern line of one of the states they were met by the superintendent of education, escorted to the state capital, shown the sights and accompanied to the southern border on their way out. Would such a thing have happened to a band of Mexican teachers visiting the United States? Possibly so, providing the matter was arranged in advance by some one with a sense of international courtesy and personal friendliness. Otherwise, "Quién sabe?"—Who knows?

In spite of his aristocratic traditions, the Latin is at heart democratic, within the limits of his horizon. His democracy is not very far-reaching as yet; he is not thinking of becoming a brother to all men everywhere, but neither are we of the United States. Within the limits of his understanding of the term he is as demo-



cratic as anybody else. Any administrator, business man, or diplomat who would get on well with these people will soon learn that in dealing with the best of them it is well not to give direct orders. Commands may do for the peon or *roto* but even they respond to kindly treatment.

About the council table they are admirable work-fellows. They are usually willing to look at both sides of a question, consider its various possibilities and discuss issues frankly. Like all keen formers of plans, their sleeves are not always innocent of something other than their arms, but that is human nature. The interesting fact is that they do not look up nor down upon those with whom they work on level terms. They are ready to deal with an administrator as equals. So far as I can see they have no more "respect" for a bishop than do the fellow workers of our boasted northern democracy.

## CHAPTER X

### UNTOLD TALES

THE most far-reaching effects of the gospel leaven do not come with observation. Human nature and social situations are not changed by sky-rocket flashes but by silent forces that often work while we sleep. There are genuine dramatic incidents that make good stories in the telling, but the continued impact of the spirit of Christ on the hearts and minds of men and the habits of life sometimes seem, a humdrum story of the day's work. The greatest miracle of missions is not the occasional tragic tale nor spectacular triumph but the slow remaking of life that goes steadily forward night and day.

There are the struggles and groanings of a Finance Committee, where, in practice, is wrought out the high strategy of every field. No one could make a good newspaper story of a finance committee meeting, but it is there that the plans are laid, measures devised, and men face the crashing adjustments of interest against interest and the grinding grief of making one dollar do two dollars and sixty-five cents worth of work. Hungry-eyed men gather about the pitiful little pile of dollars on the table, each

knowing that the life and death of his own work depends upon how much or how little of that pile is to come his way. Was ever greater strain on the Christ-spirit in a missionary's heart than that same struggle to be both zealous and generous at the same time? Those who face such adjustments year after year know what it means.

I have seen them come in, tense-nerved for the test, more anxious than calm, intent upon saving something from their wrecked hopes. With an appropriation far below expectation, their pathetic prayers that the mustard seed before them might be multiplied by divine grace and wisdom were enough to bring tears to more eyes than mine. I have listened to the tense debates setting one work against another, the while every man was trying to be a brother to all, to hold to the Golden Rule at heavy cost to one's own work, and I have seen the light of hope fade as the plans fell apart from the sheer impossibility of it. "God pity us and those who have put us into this impossible case," we have prayed in anguish of soul.

Yet even here come triumphs of the mind that was in Christ Jesus and may yet be in his followers to-day. Either there is grace sufficient for a finance committee meeting on a short appropriation or there is nothing before us but defeat and sundown. Out of the hours of

struggle I have seen emerge a softening of spirit, a consideration for each other that clearly spoke of the presence among us of the Form of the Fourth walking unseen through the furnace of difficulty. With ten thousand dollars of needs and eight hundred available I have seen district superintendents vie with each other to make the motions giving first help to another's work, and I have heard men say with something near a smile, "All right, you take it; I will wait; perhaps help will come next year."

These things do not make platform stories, but they do mark the coming of the Kingdom on earth. Without the spirit of Him who saw his own cause—and ours—wrecked in his time for need of men who understood him, we should long ago have collapsed on every major mission field of the church.

There are problems of administration of which we hear little just because they are so unspectacular. Yet every kingdom-builder knows that in a thousand cases it is here that the battle is lost or won, and no one not of the inner circle knows anything about it. An impulsive nationalist leader imagining mistreatment and lack of appreciation on the part of some missionary does not make good reading or good telling, and as a very real problem he must be "solved" or he will wreck more work than ten men can

mend. The one way out is to change the temper and outlook of that man and make him an asset rather than a liability—a prosy performance at best but one that may turn the tide toward victory. Some of the most tragic accidents of missionary history, involving divisions, defections, and disasters, have happened because some administrator blundered in dealing with an earnest national man who had potential leadership but who for the moment had mixed his conscience and his judgment and saw red.

I remember one such case. A leading native pastor felt abused and neglected in the ministrations of appreciation. Several missionaries tried to argue him out of it and added oil to the flames. Presently came a man of God, who spent several hours with this restless pastor. No one ever knew what happened; but a transformation took place in that hour and the trouble ended. A cause was saved as truly as by the dramatic issue of a battlefield.

Every administrator stands nearly every day, certainly at every Annual Conference, in the presence of potential shipwrecks and disruptions of the work. A word here, an encouragement there, a touch of sympathy, a glimpse of better things, a kindly pressure of the hand may change the temper of the human heart and turn the issue for good. It does not need a giant's

strength on the helm to shift the course from the rocks to the safe channel, but it requires a lot of know-how and, above all else, the spirit of Christ.

In the last analysis it is sympathy and imagination that count. Putting oneself in another's place is not a spectacular attainment but it is wonderfully effective in solving personal problems. Of all who have borne the burdens of leadership surely Jesus himself excelled in this identification of his own personality with the problems of those with whom he had to deal. We do not find him rushing dramatically into the front of the battle and shouting orders to his followers, but we do see him quietly entering into their lives, putting his hand unerringly on the critical issue, and in the end pushing them out into the leadership of a world cause with no equipment to mention except their knowledge of him and the enduement of his Spirit. Burdened with the responsibility of decisions, selections, adjustments and direction of movements, who does not cry aloud for a double portion of that Spirit that knew what was in men, and understood how best to energize it for all-the-world service!

There is no story to speak of in the silent influences of a Christian schoolroom, busy with the daily round of recitations, blackboards, and



study periods. The problems of discipline are notably barren of story-making values, but some of the greatest character-building possibilities lie just here. And woe be unto him who tries without the mind of the Great Teacher to do the undefinable yet all-important thing that the missionary goes out into the wilderness to perform. Yet such influences do finally register in visible form. I was speaking one day with the cultured principal of one of the best schools for girls in Latin America. "I am a great admirer," she said, "of the work that you are doing in your school in this city. It is in many ways unique." Being human and curious, I wanted to know why. "I find it hard to say exactly," she said, "but there is a something that you put into your pupils that we are unable to attain. I can tell your students by the way they walk the streets and lift their heads and look you in the eye. It is character they are getting." No great story but a great result in life.

A score of humble folk in a rented room on top of the Andes is no large factor in the progress of the world, hardly worth mentioning. Yet I have listened to prayers from the lips and hearts of such people, that for me at least did open the gates of the unseen. There was the ladder set up and contact made between a sordid life and the great white throne, and the angels of a



Divine Presence passed down and up. In that place nothing was common nor unclean. In such a meeting once, I was kneeling beside an earnest missionary, not yet in effective command of the language. The prayers touched our hearts. Much moved by it all, he began to pray in Spanish, always a difficult thing for the beginner. He went well for a sentence or two and then, failing to find a word, leaned over and whispered to me, "Miller, how do you say 'deliver us'?" Every few words, it was "Miller, how do you say this?" And so absorbed were we all by the spirit of the moment that no one of us at the time noticed any incongruity in what was happening.

Sometimes there is a comical twist to the case, as in the matter of an animated Sunday-school attendance conflict, for such it had become, in a far interior town. Delegations of frenzied boys were rushing out into the streets, seizing by force any hapless youngster who got in the way, bringing him literally by force to Sunday school. No very deep spiritual values in this, to be sure, even as with you and me, but nevertheless something new under the Peruvian sun, with its deeper meaning for runners who know how to read.

A lonely local preacher, pastor of an eight-point circuit, was with difficulty making his way

about the mountain trails on foot—anyway to get to his appointments. A little judicious correspondence brought from friends afar funds for a horse and saddle and released the time and strength of the pastor for larger usefulness. A dull, drab story, to be sure, duplicated here and there many times; why repeat it? Just because of its very commonplaceness and of the significant fact that by such everyday means the Kingdom comes. For every stage story of the average missionary there are a hundred everyday happenings that far outweigh in Kingdom values the thrillers that bring the heavy applause.

There is Miguel, name enough for any one of a score of his kind. Out of poverty and rags he has come through the handicap of a mud hut and a drunken father, an illiterate family and a hopeless outlook on life. Properly presented, the now efficient pastor, Miguel, would make a fairly dramatic story, but in practice, Miguel's power as a leader has little relation to his humble origin. Probably the resident missionary himself is the only one who realizes that there is anything dramatic about the story. But there is the man, bearing his witness, doing his work, preaching his gospel, and the less emphasis placed upon his humble origin the greater his influence with his parishioners.

And who shall tell, or wants to tell, the story of the church rows and painful disagreements among brethren that have marred the progress of the gospel in all ages? Yet here are some of the major triumphs of the spirit of Christ. There was the church in the city of—well, any name will do. All was going well, when an ex-revolutionist got into the flock, secured control of a majority of the official board, somehow got the inexperienced pastor under his influence and set up a movement looking toward a division of the church and an independent organization. A sordid tale, to be sure, but one that has been duplicated in other lands. What result? Neither the district superintendent nor the bishop was able to resolve the situation at once. A session of the national pastors of the Conference took up the matter, met the situation in a spirit of brotherliness and sympathy, and after careful consideration, rendered a unanimous decision, to which the church gave heed. The danger melted away, peace reigned, and the cause regained its momentum. Why tell such a tale? Just because there is here more real evidence of the prevailing leadership of the spirit of Christ than in many incidents of dramatic personal evangelism that may bring a lump to our throats and tears to our eyes. It is not always the emotionally powerful incident

that bears the highest potential values for the kingdom of God.

Who is to make a good story out of the monotonous daily grind of a mission dispensary which day after day hands out advice and sympathy and medicine to scores of unfortunate people, many of whom, according to commercial ratings, have no great value to mankind? The faithful Mexican "doctora" who administers five days per week in the Aztecas dispensary in Mexico City, the long lists of unfortunates helped in the Good Samaritan Dispensary in Santiago, the faithful nurses doing what they can in Huancayo—and doing it well—the services of such a man as Doctor Burrow, of the Bolivian Indian Mission, the vast sum of toil and help supplied by the medical workers of the Seventh Day Adventist Missions, the Buen Samaritano Hospital at Guanajuato, and the Mission Hospital at Puebla in Mexico—who can sum up the total of these works of mercy?

Sometimes the passing visitor to these medical stations may fail to find the dramatic rescue meeting in progress and may miss the point of the service rendered. One visitor spent a few hours in the Anglo-American Hospital in Peru. There were no posters on the walls, no scheduled daily exhortations, no enforced signing of con-

verts' cards or tithers' pledges. Christian missionaries were rendering skilled medical service in the name of the Great Physician, and the influence of that service was reaching out for a thousand miles. Possibly more prejudice has been dissolved in high places, more doors have been opened into difficult fields, by this work than can at present be counted. A growing waiting list, the confidence of men in high places who have before feared and hated the missionary and his cause, a constantly extending list of benefited people, from and to everywhere—these are the surface ripples of deeper currents of spiritual influences and moral forces that are going out and into the total of Peruvian life, and beyond them to the peoples round about. It is not easy to make a dramatic story out of this vast total of good works; it is too much like writing about the sea and its contents, but the seed is being scattered and the harvest time will tell the results.

“Modern methods,” in so far as they are imported copies of “how-we-did-it-somewhere-else,” are not highly popular in any country. The South American is not averse to importing his furniture, his clothes, or his automobile, but when it comes to his religion he wants it home-grown—exactly as we do.

Wherever means have been freshly adapted to

a definite end, there has been satisfactory response, regardless of the source of the suggestion. The social service and educational program developed at Montevideo, Uruguay, in the Cerro District, were a radical departure from anything before known in that country, but they were highly successful and met with warm approval and hearty support. Religious education has made its way slowly but with satisfactory results, as we have been able to swing away from the traditional catechism basis. Sunday-school contests have worked out in South America about as they do in other lands and Mexico has achieved some fine results by purely competitive measures. The Young Men's Christian Association as well as its sister organization, is itself most decidedly modern and wholly new to the traditions of any historically Catholic country, but the success of these organizations has been phenomenal. In practice no small part of this success lies in the skill with which foreign secretaries have kept themselves in the background and pushed national leaders to the front.

School principals have invented and introduced various local projects, most of them with high success. All sorts of contests, debates, social-service measures, celebrations, relief activities and unique programs have made good.



Baseball is becoming more popular every year. It is a unique thing under the Latin sun to see young men out on a campus playing off baseball games as part of the course of study, but the results have been highly satisfactory in the development of certain character-traits hard to inculcate in any other way.

New to South American churches has been the organization of the women and girls for any other object than that of supplementing indirectly the financial resources of the local church. A thousand women of the churches of Chile were enrolled in home study classes and proved themselves adept and eager students of the problems of home, religion, hygiene, food values, clothing economics, together with regular Bible study. Strong emphasis was placed upon the family altar as the basis of Christian living and the results were far-reaching. The following year the Roman Catholic Church began a feminist movement of its own, ever one of the highest testimonials to the success of our methods. The results of the class organization of the Chilean women have been profound and permanent.

In Mexico a similar movement has been inaugurated among the women of the Protestant churches, with the interesting item that the men everywhere take a deep and sympathetic inter-



est in whatever helps their families. The Mexican women have shown remarkable ability in leading and managing their own organizations, and pastors everywhere have co-operated willingly with the measures for widening and deepening the life interests of the women of their churches.

An organization for girls was set up among the young women of the Chilean churches in 1923, and met with instant response and effective co-operation on the part of the girls themselves. Latin women and girls, like their sisters everywhere, are eager for any taste of and part in the expanding life of the age, and their keen social spirit will give them large returns upon their investment of time and effort in any movement to which they give themselves freely.

It is such measures as these and the results attained through them that mark the most far-reaching transformations of the gospel in the life of any people.

## CHAPTER XI

## HOW A MISSION GROWS

PROBABLY there are people to whom missionary work is missionary work regardless of time, place, or circumstance. In point of fact every successful mission follows certain well-defined stages of development, as distinct and recognizable as the periods of growth in the life of a boy. We never produce the best men by treating a boy all his life as a child.

The modern missionary epic is a little more than a century old. In all the larger fields there are four stages of growth.

There were first of all the pioneers who went out to unknown hardship, ill will and difficulty of every sort. There were giants in those days who counted not the cost and dickered not with boards over the matter of salaries and allowances. They went to Africa in 1832, to China ten years later, to India nine years after that, to Latin America in 1873. We have now forgotten how meager were the visible results of that first pouring out of service and sacrifice and sometimes of life itself. Measured by the number of converts won, churches organized, schools established, their lives were failures. Ten years

in Foochow to baptize one convert! Eight years in India without tangible result! Beginnings in Latin America so small that even the Missionary Society took twenty years to recognize the work of William Taylor on the West Coast!

Possibly they were better men than some of us, their modern successors; they who worked on for eight, nine, or ten years to win one convert. Some of us would have set off to find a pond where the fish were biting more eagerly. But, thank God, they *were* better men than some of us. They builded better than they knew the foundations of the abiding city of God among men.

If any one is disposed to think lightly of those men and women who accomplished so little of visible result, let him betake himself to the heart of Africa, the reaches of West China, the far north of India, or even the thin air of upper South America, and there, amid the comparative comforts of a more modern day, undertake to deal with a strange people in an unknown tongue and a thousand hindrances alien to the lands of the West, and to get as near the heart of it as possible, let him set out on a lone journey in unfamiliar regions and waken at two o'clock in the morning to reflect that popular prejudice may run him out of town before night, while home and friends and kindred and safety

are ten thousand miles away on the other side of the world; there is no way to set down on paper the sensations of such a position. It has to be lived to be realized. And they lived it, those pioneers who went out and made ready for us to follow after them.

There were valiant men who endured *as seeing Him who is invisible*, the inner secret of their courage and devotion. What men they were! Here a service in a house, there a rapid exit from some fanatical town, always under verbal fire of the intolerant priests—Penzotti in the Callao jail, hungry, despised and forsaken. Some of them were cursed and reviled as the offscouring of the earth, but patient and plodding and persevering for His name's sake.

Such was the pioneer stage of the mission cause in which the missionary himself was the leader, the preacher, the teacher, the translator, the printer, the visitor, the Bible woman, the builder, the property agent, the treasurer, the bookkeeper, the explorer, the diplomat, all things to all men all the time, anything to get a start. It was heroic and splendid and apostolic!

There may be a few persons who think of such experiences as typical of missionary work today, but aside from a few independent faith missions, so called, we have outgrown that phase long ago on every major mission field. If we

do not get beyond that, we are less than our fathers.

The second stage of missionary activity comes by natural processes of growth, and sooner or later finds the missionary some sort of leader or superintendent over a staff of national teachers, preachers, printers, visitors, translators, builders—workers of all sorts. It is an ideal picture in the minds of many earnest people. There is something satisfying about it; the control is in safe hands, there are comparatively few risks; the leadership is experienced and brings with it the background of the Christian centuries and the wisdom of the long struggle toward the Light.

Yes, it is a satisfying picture, possibly too much so. The older missionaries who valiantly survived the pioneer days are apt to regard the attainment of this second stage as the final triumph of the cause. "The way to do missionary work," said one of these noble veterans, "is to raise the money at home, send it out here and use it in the prosecuting of the work." But what he meant was work under direction of the foreign missionary and with small reference to the pushing of self-support or self-administration on the part of the native church.

This, of course, is not strange. When a life of service has brought satisfactory results, it is

too much to expect that the veteran should suddenly reverse his methods. He is ready enough to concede the principle of an indigenous native church, but he is never quite ready to admit that the time has arrived to resign the control in favor of less efficient and experienced leaders. Quite likely he seriously doubts the ability of the natives to "carry on"—certainly not after the fashion of the missionary. Which is merely to say that human nature continues unchanged through the centuries.

Not all missions in Latin America have outgrown this second stage. In Bolivia, Peru, and Central America leadership still rests largely in the hands of the American missionary, part of which is due to the predominantly educational character of the mission progress. There never can be a distinctly national leadership until we consciously and deliberately set about the training and pushing out into service of a native ministry. Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Mexico all fall within the third period of development.

This third period brings problems and sometimes heartaches. Any parents who have raised children to be sixteen or seventeen years old can readily understand what a mission goes through in the adolescent stage. There comes a time when the young folks know better than



their parents what is good for the family. With all due respect to the many good qualities of their elders, they admit frankly that the old folks are out of date and that they themselves could manage matters much better if given a chance.

Something like this takes place with the children of our faith and prayers on a mission field. They love us much and are not slow to say so, but when it comes to a real inner understanding of the vital problems and conditions of the work, they readily concede that they know the case better than we do and are quite generous in the offer of advice on problems of administration and procedure.

And the distressing thing about it is that they are often right. There are a thousand fine points of language that the foreigner never gets, with his lifelong brogue and halting tongue. There are traditions and aspirations and folklore and a multitude of linguistic turns and twists that are an unknown maze to the poor missionary, struggling with a dozen handicaps that the native overcomes in his childhood.

If we are foolish, we are apt to remind our children that when they are able to manage the family better than we can, we will turn it over to them. If we are very foolish, we may shut our eyes and say that there is nothing to this,



other than the restlessness of a group of ungrateful converts and unappreciative paid workers who ought to continue to recognize our superior background, and incidentally our annual appropriation of money from distant sources. And if perchance we are very, very foolish indeed, we may even tell our mission children to go along about their business and not meddle with matters too high for them. Rarely have matters come to this pass, but some of the greatest problems in mission lands to-day are those of effecting a successful and profitable transition from the stage of missionary leaders of native followers to that of national leaders with foreign missionary helpers where they can render service for which they are exceptionally qualified.

It is notable that in all the larger and more mature missions of the church this transition has been pretty well effected and our national churches are beginning to run on their own power. With a few jolts here and there the shift comes about and with it a new spirit of responsibility and self-help appears among national leaders and their constituencies.

This is not to say that the work of the missionaries is over; far from it. There never was need so urgent for the right kind of missionaries. The new missionary, in keeping with the

most successful of his kind to-day, will have to put into action something more than talk about the John-the-Baptist attitude of decreasing in the presence of emerging leadership. He will become a specialist, doing the thing for which he is equipped and to which he gives his life as unstintedly as to the spectacular task of leading the hosts to victory.

Whatever the missionary does, he brings to the whole situation a certain steadiness, a morale that comes from the background of the Christian centuries, and that can be imparted only through a human life that has come to know that indefinable something imparted by social atmosphere and Christian traditions. Dramatic are the stories of the first converts in all lands, men who forsook all and in the face of persecution and bitterness went out to follow Christ and often paid high penalty for their courage. It is heroic and splendid. But only the experienced know how heavy is the handicap of heathenism, Romanism, or whatever other "ism" it is that clings to the unconscious thought-processes and inner reactions of the converts straight from the other side. Splendid as they are, there is yet a something else deeper and more permanent that comes with the second and third generation of Christian faith and service. The men who are profoundly influenc-

ing new-forming civilizations are not often of the first generation up from paganism. Even Romanism, with its better light, handicaps greatly those who have imbibed deeply from its fountains of superstition and intolerance. The heralded ex-priest rarely ever makes an efficient Protestant pastor; he cannot forget the inner slant of Jesuitism that clings to him through life.

Yes, we need the missionary and are going to need him for a long time to come, as a steadier and strengthener of the whole situation. He will come as a specialist, a helper, a counselor, a teacher of this, that, or the other, but whatever he does he will be an indispensable factor in the forward movement of the cause of Christ in the ends of the earth.

There are two quite distinct methods of mission organization, and each of them had its own way of effecting the transition to national leadership. The churches of congregational form and polity as well as those of the Presbyterian group begin with two fairly well separated bodies, the mission, composed of the missionaries who handle the money and dominate the situation and the Convention or Presbytery or some other organization composed principally of national pastors. This form works well in the second stage of mission

growth, but sometimes offers difficulties when national leadership begins to come into its own. The problems of transfer of authority and administration from the mission group to the national body are not simple. On this particular problem, the Methodist system of Annual Conferences, in which every member, missionary or native, has equal voice and voting privileges, and an executive finance committee with adequate national membership as well as a Cabinet of district superintendents the majority or all of whom are natives, gives admirable results; no mission can develop very far without the balance of power coming automatically into the hands of the nationals themselves. It is a fact that our troubles at this point are small in Latin America, where our national leaders have shown a maturity of judgment and a clearness of vision that make them capable of taking over the responsibilities of administration.

That evangelistic results should be meager under distinctly foreign leadership is to be expected. No field has yet shown marked gains in converts, new churches and widely extended influence until the leadership of propaganda work has come into native hands, or under control of men who were to all intents and purposes natives. Anything that gives the gospel an exotic flavor militates directly against its rapid

spread. There is something very deep seated in the tendency of every convert to see in Christ a fellow citizen, and no one worthy of the mantle of leadership is going to give himself unstintedly to the promotion of an essentially foreign product.

A fourth development appears on every mature field, and it begins always in the third stage of native leadership and missionary specialists. Whenever the gospel gets to the point of reproducing its apostolic life and power among any people it inevitably begets a fresh reincarnation of the original missionary spirit. Once again the Great Commission impels transformed men to go out into the regions beyond, tell their story, bear witness to their own experience and follow in the footsteps of the pioneers whose labors laid the foundations of their own faith. Such is the final proof of the high calling of these new leaders of the cause.

If a mission is really alive, some form of missionary effort will sooner or later arise spontaneously among its native leaders. Latin America has now three national missionary societies, each in its own way registering the outworking impulse to spread the Good News abroad.

The National Missionary Society of Chile is the oldest of these forces, organized in 1917

upon the suggestion of Bishop W. F. Oldham that the Chilean pastors and laymen get together a society entirely under their own leadership. A small beginning was made in evangelistic work with a few hundred pesos raised the first year. Following years saw a steady increase of contributions and a clear defining of the aims and methods of the Society until sixteen thousand pesos per year, three home missionaries, and aid and comfort for a number of projects have made of this society one of the virile and aggressive evangelistic forces of the Chile Conference. The leadership of this work is wholly in the hands of the Chilean men and they have given abundant evidence of their capacity for the direction of still larger work in the years to come, as available resources may increase.

The Missionary Society of the East South America Conference was organized in 1920 for the purpose of carrying on missionary work within and without the boundaries of the Annual Conference. A strong board of directors was named and began cautiously and constructively to outline plans for the strengthening of the weak places and the extension of the work to points beyond the financial reach of the mission proper. The following year a proposal arose to send a native Argentine pastor as a mis-



sionary to Spain. The idea found popular favor, the argument being advanced that it would be a coals-of-fire act of Christian retaliation to send a Christian missionary back to preach the gospel to the mother country that sent the conquerors to the New World to destroy and pillage the land.

This society has made good headway and has already sent a contribution to aid the evangelical work in Spain. The recent decrease in mission funds has stimulated the brethren of this field to heroic self-help, without which the work must have perished in a number of weaker points. The same need of greatly increased self-help has made inevitable the temporary postponement of the proposed mission to Spain.

The Mexican Missionary Society was organized in 1923 and reorganized in 1925 on a broader and more stable basis. In 1924 missionary appropriations of this society began in earnest the realization of the threefold program of Mexican missions; namely, the formation of a church extension fund, the building up of an emergency fund for relief of national pastors in time of special need, and the carrying on of pioneer missionary work both in and out of Mexico. The first act of the new directorate in March, 1925, was to send aid to the Mexican missionary in San José, Costa Rica, and the



work of this society has already saved the day for more than one emergency case and needy field.

Mexico has the honor of having sent the first Latin national missionary to a field essentially foreign so far as the senders were concerned. In 1917, the Rev. Eduardo Zapata was sent to Costa Rica on a pioneering expedition and in 1919 was appointed to work in the Central America Mission. After seven years of labor he returned to his native land and the Rev. Arturo Andrade was sent as a missionary from Mexico to the same field. That these Mexican Christians should think at all of sending aid to another field is high evidence of the apostolic spirit of the leaders of the work.

## CHAPTER XII

## ACTS OF SOME MODERN APOSTLES

THERE is suggestive likeness between the apostolic story and some of the events of modern missionary operations. Certainly, the same Presence of Christ that dominated the consciousness and witness of the early believers is with his people to-day. There is interest and information in the unadorned recital of incidents common to every field.

## A QUARTERLY MEETING

The train stopped at a far interior station about sundown. Two hundred people were waiting to greet us and walk with us the mile to the town. To-morrow would be the Quarterly Meeting Sunday and half of these believers were from points five, ten, or fifteen miles away, here to stay till Monday morning. The church was a lean-to roof against the wall of the three-room parsonage, open to the yard, now as busy as a beehive in swarming season with preparations for the night. Charcoal fires lighted the scene and the steady "pat-pat" of the tortilla makers kept accompaniment to conversation. It was

a goodly attendance with pastor, local preacher, exhorters, district superintendent, and last of all a general superintendent to share the celebration.

The Saturday evening service was brief and mostly a happy preparation for the morrow. By ten o'clock, as best they could, all were arranged for the night, the men in a corner of the yard, the women on the floor of the parsonage. Silence settled on the scene, or near-silence, for some audible sleepers there are everywhere.

An impromptu Sunday school at nine o'clock served to tune up hearts for the day. At ten-thirty came the sermon, communion, thirty-seven baptisms of converts and reception of members. An afternoon Quarterly Conference brought in reports from the big circuit, and the hours were soon gone till supper time. The day closed with a testimony meeting, several decisions, a backslider or two warmed over. One young man told of his own conversion three months ago and his concern over the moral degradation of a village three miles away. He had visited these neighbors, told his story, gathered a few of them in a private house, and held simple meetings. A brief and practical exposition of a chapter from the Acts of the Apostles closed the day. Monday morning saw the hundred visitors outward bound on foot for

their distant villages. It had been a good day in the story of the Acts of the Morelos Apostles.

### DANCE HALL EVANGELISM

Juan García lived in a godless town, but by chance visited one day and night a neighboring village where he attended a gospel meeting, gave his heart to God, and came home a changed man. For the accomplishment of his downfall his old-time friends organized a wild and vicious neighborhood dance with plenty of liquid refreshments. Would he attend? Yes, he would, but with reservations. He would neither drink nor dance. Otherwise, with pleasure. Conditions were promptly accepted—in principle. Details would be attended to after he arrived on the scene. But Juan was firm, also good-natured; mingled with all and sundry, partook of food and lemonade but nothing more. A few days later he made his party calls and tactfully called attention to the good points of his new religion which found ways to organize social events without the disorder and debauchery that followed these drinking bouts. A few days later he invited a number of them to his house, told them his story, read his Bible, and invited them to come again, which they did until some of them were persuaded to follow in the same Way, and they organized a meeting of their own with

Juan as leader. To-day, as a local preacher, he is pastor of the church.

### MARCELINO, MEASURE FOR MEN

Full five thousand miles from Broadway lived a few years ago a young man who came into membership in the church, taught a Sunday-school class, worked hard, saved his money and married a fine young woman of the same church.

His wife entered heartily into his plans and together they opened a store, resolving to close on Sunday, sell no liquor and give the tenth of their earnings to the Lord. There was plenty of ridicule, but the store prospered, two branches were opened in other towns, and as the years went by, Marcelino became a man of influence. He now has a big store at his home base, eight or ten clerks, a chapel built next door, and is serving without salary as pastor of the church whose members he has himself won. Most significant of all is the fact that men were coming, not merely to trade in the store of an honest merchant, but to ask advice and unconsciously they were measuring their lives by his. He had set up a new standard of character and conduct that was influencing men for twenty miles about.

### PETER, FROM SPAIN

Not many years ago, in a fair province of old

Spain, a young man of good family and education was visiting a traveling fair-and-circus and by accident bought of a wandering colporteur a New Testament. Its contents meant little to him, and when he went to the priest for help, he was told, as was often the case in such circumstances, that he must burn the book. So far, all very conventional and true to form.

But this young man, we will call him Peter, for convenience, was not easily turned aside and later on did find a few Protestants who helped him, and he found a personal faith that survived a trans-Atlantic voyage, and came with him to the New World, where he settled in a city blessed by a mission church, with which he soon cast in his lot and went to work. He became president of the Young People's Society, exhorter, local preacher, and when he spoke the people took heed unto his word. Later he was made pastor of a "situation" without a single member. But here also his word was with power and the people began to take heed, and in time there was a church. When the Annual Conference met, Peter came, bringing his sheaves with him, and was received as a preacher on trial. So far, so good.

#### THE MAN FROM MACEDONIA

And it came to pass in those days that a coun-



tryman came in from a point six days' journey away and went up and down the streets of that city, saying unto all whom he met, "Can you tell me where I can find a church that is not Roman Catholic?" And, behold, one said unto him, "Yonder it is at the end of the Central Avenue." And when he drew near thereto, he read a sign which said, "Prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings." And it was even then Wednesday of the week.

It happened that I was present that Wednesday evening and saw a strangely nervous and ill-at-ease man come in and find a seat. Someone handed him a hymn book which he held without looking at it. I was called out at the close of the meeting but the next morning the pastor came with a tale. This man from Macedonia lived in the far mountains. Ten years ago he had acquired in some way from a wandering brother a copy of a strange book which after a time he began to read. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," he read and he read on until, after several years, he had read it through. Again he read it through, to the last page.

There was no priest in that distant place, and about a year previous to this time he had resolved to save his money and make the journey to the capital to find out for himself something

more about it. When he walked into the prayer meeting that night he had never heard a sermon, a hymn, a testimony, nor attended a meeting of any kind except a very rare mass or baptism by the priest who came once a year.

Here was raw material ready for the refiner. We called in Peter from Spain and for a month, as long as his money lasted, the visitor gave diligent heed to instructions, two, three or four hours per day and began to learn with astonishing rapidity the things that a Christian ought to know and believe for his soul's health. He learned to sing a score of hymns, he attained some clear understanding of the language of his own heart, he came to know the meaning of many things that had greatly puzzled him, and his faith and devotion were beautiful to behold. When his money was gone, we gave him a farewell and laden with Gospels and leaflets he set forth on his homeward journey.

Three months later, Peter went out, also bearing supplies, and spent a month with this countryman, visiting, preaching, teaching and baptizing some sixteen converts and organizing two Sunday schools. There was no one to leave in charge except our friend of the long journey.

Now, such a man probably should have developed at once into a modern apostle. In fact, he has done exceedingly well, but with no edu-

cation other than the rudiments and without any training whatever except such as we were able to give him in his brief stay at the capital, surrounded in his home by a maelstrom of vice and depravity and temptation, it is hard for the reader of this to form any idea of the exceeding difficulty of his position.

Two years after his first visit he came to the Annual Conference and gave in his report like a veteran in the ranks. I had a long talk with him in the afternoon, and after going over his peculiar problems and temptations I asked if there was anything that we could do to help him in his work.

"Well," he said, "I know that you have no money and can do nothing toward opening a permanent work there, but if you could only send out someone at least once a year to give us a little encouragement and let our people know that we are not wholly forgotten nor forsaken, it would be a great help." And the regions round about that place are white unto the harvest, for the people are as sheep having no shepherd and perish for the bread of life.

#### THE COMMITTEE FROM PERSISTENCY

It was the week before Conference, the Conference when we faced the forty-per-cent cut in mission appropriations. We had met it as best

we could, knowing what it must mean of closing work, discharged workers, and disappointed people. I was at home one day when two men called. One was a fairly well dressed man, ex-mayor of his town, as it proved, I will call it Persistency just because its people acted that way. The other man was an Indian. We shook hands, asked about all the relatives, wished each other the compliments of the season and got down to business. They had heard, so the ex-mayor stated, that there was to be a drastic reduction in the work for lack of funds and they had come in from their city of eleven thousand people some forty miles away to secure my pre-Conference promise that this cut would not fall on them. Whatever happened, they must not lose their church nor school. It was good argument and well stated, but I was in no position to argue with scant funds. Someone would be hit and probably hurt, and it might be themselves, I could not tell.

When the ex-mayor finished his plea the Indian brother got into action. He was a complete type of several millions of his race—dark, rugged, kindly, barefooted, earnest. He had made some preparation of dress to visit his general superintendent, to the extent at least of a pair of sandals, a clean pair of white trousers, and an old-fashioned, “hard-boiled,” stiff-front

white shirt. But it was all clean, and so was he, though he did not wear collar, tie, vest or coat; how could he when there was not a button on the shirt? He sat on the edge of his chair, folded his hands, closed his eyes and began with the Spanish version of "Onward, Christian soldiers." That, he urged, was the true spirit of the gospel. Progress! Movement! Advance! If a start is made and then abandoned, the second start may not get very far, and the third attempt may even go backward. The work in Persistency had made a good start and admirable progress. To stop it now would be ruin. The school had really "dis-fanaticized" the spirit of the place and the church was a moral power. He himself was no great one, but his children were in the school, and that meant that they might come to something worthy in life, which was indeed one of the possibilities of the case. On and on he pleaded until his old brown face fairly shone with something like a glory of purpose. With a little more imagination I might have detected a faint halo.

It was enough to move a heart of stone, but reduced funds are harder than stone and I could only repeat the excuse of all superintendents when in an impossible position, I would do the best I could. At last they were gone, after much handshaking and farewell.

Conference came and lasted for a week of re-adjustments, cuts, reductions, heart-breaks and shattered work. Persistency saved its school, a W. F. M. S. affair, but after we had gathered about the altar as the appointments were read, there was no pastor for my friends.

Two days later I was called down to the central office. A committee wished to see me. And there I met my two brethren from Persistency, and they had this time brought with them seven women. And these good women were versed in the Scriptures, for they forthwith laid hold on one man and the trouble was that I was the man. I had taken away their pastor, they stated. Well, I parried, I was very sorry. Not half so sorry as they, I was informed; also that they had come in to learn what I proposed to do about it. I explained and expounded, but they listened politely and then asked again what was I going to do about it.

Would they not call on the district superintendent? Not at all. They had already done so and he had informed them that I had made the appointments, not he. And, just what was I going to do about it?

It was distressing in the extreme and back of those nine people I could see, with a little imagination, fifteen other churches and committees too far away to get at me as these were



doing. They were pleading for the work of a crippled mission. Presently I had an idea, at least I thought I had, though it proved to be nonexplosive. If I would shake hands with them, perhaps they would go. And I did, right down the line, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, but not one of them budged an inch. They meant business. Just what was I going to do about it anyway? What in the world could I do? I wondered.

At last I had another idea. I felt that I must be going, I told them, and I really did feel that way. I had no very clear idea whither, but I could do nothing by staying there. I left them sitting there in a row, that committee from Persistency, looking as if they had lost their last hope. That they are not there yet, I now know, because I went back two days later and they had gone their discouraged way back home.

A month later I went to see them. A pastor from some distance was trying to visit them occasionally, with no visible results. But they were hard at it, repairing the church, mending windows and doors and putting the place in order. What meant all this? I wanted to know. Simply that they believed that God would send them a pastor and they would be ready when he came.

A few months later I told the story, up to this

point, in a good church in the United States, and at the close of the service an unnamed brother came up and supplied the funds to reopen the church at Persistency. A seminary student was appointed pastor, prayer was answered, and the work goes on. But what of the other fifteen whose prayers are still unanswered?

### THE SCHOOL THAT REFUSED TO DIE

Barnabas also had heard rumors of reduced funds and came to me before Conference, showing by certain incontestable proofs how that his parish school must under no conditions be closed. When reduced to writing his reasons proved to be very good ones; the trouble was not with the logic of Barnabas but with the inflexibility of the funds.

When the Finance Committee met, Barnabas was without the door waiting to learn his fate. Word came out that the school would close—no funds. Nothing daunted, he replied, "Just let me inside that committee room and they will never close my school."

"Exactly so," groaned the burdened committee. "He will talk us to death. We will have to let him have it to save our own lives."

Again I reported to Barnabas.

"All right," he said, "do you intend to send me back for another year?"

I so admitted.

"Very well, I will never go back there till I have from somewhere funds to carry on that school."

"Now, that's fine, Barnabas; go to it and the Lord be with you. See what money you can raise, and I'm back of you."

"How much are you back of me?"

"How much do you need?"

"Five hundred dollars for the year."

"All right, get up a subscription paper and I will give you one fifth of it."

The next day came a handsomely drafted paper, and Barnabas set forth to conquer. Around and around he went to the same people who had already given all they had, but somehow he got a little more from them, at last enough to keep the school alive another year, though he cut the wages of his teachers. That's Barnabas.

The next year came another severe decrease in funds and Barnabas appeared at Conference in despair, resources exhausted, two months in arrears with his teachers, much discouraged. "Go at it again," I urged. "You did it before."

"Yes, but the missionaries who helped me have been recalled and I can't find enough to get through."

It was a truly impossible case, and the school

was again doomed. But a month later a business man wrote me from California that he had had a good year and could I use a few hundred dollars of the Lord's money in some needy place? Could I? Could I?

So Barnabas saved his school another year. Talk about faith missions! It's all faith, the faith of a vast adventure with Christ and a few of his people who are willing to trust him with a little of their money.

#### SCATTERED ABOUT

Politics take devious corners in some of these lands and sometimes the innocent suffer more than their share. There was Silas, whose fault lay in having been employed in a printing office that had printed seditious tracts, of which Silas himself knew nothing at the time, but, falling under suspicion, decided that discretion was at times a very good quality and disappeared one dark night. His persecutors gave him up for lost.

Two months passed and his pastor received a letter by a trusty messenger. Silas was staying in a community far removed from the main lines of travel and had had ample opportunity to do some thinking on his own account. As he mused over the lost estate of the people about him, the fire burned and he began to speak to the people

of a better way of life. They gave heed to his word and some of them turned unto the Lord.

This was far away from any organized mission work, and Silas sent word to the brethren at Jerusalem asking that some one come over and help a little in the work. But the brethren at Jerusalem were exceeding poor in this world's goods and were unable to equip an expedition, and Silas had to carry on as best he could. He won some converts, but the chances are that they will not get very far in the way, unless they can have a little human touch of sympathy and fellowship.

#### COMING FROM AFAR

There are many cases of that spontaneous expression of evangelistic interest that has marked the stream of religious life through the centuries. At the Mexico Conference a man appeared, having trudged his way on foot from afar, asking for a gospel messenger to his neighborhood. We were unable to help him. Up in the trans-Andean regions of Peru there is a man who moved over there for business reasons and presently began to tell his story and gather a few converts. Out in the interior of Panama a lonely school principal, converted in the church in the capital, began to teach his under-teachers the International Sunday School Lessons, under

the head of "Morals," and he wrought faithfully, according to his lights. Years ago, a brother converted in the Presbyterian Mission in Colombia, moved to Panama, kept his light shining, helped to found the new mission, later moved out into an interior town, distributing Bibles wherever he went, left somewhere the copy that fell into the hands of the man from Macedonia; went on farther, started a little Sunday school in a provincial capital; visited here and there, and with all his wanderings, kept the faith. Way out on the rim of the Isthmus is a West Indian brother who has gathered a little flock that has built a chapel in which he, as their leader, has taught them all he knew. Here and there and everywhere they are keeping their light shining in dark corners and distant highways. It is a valid testimony under difficult conditions, but God is not left without a witness.

There are veritable miracles that work so quietly that no one knows of them but they work nevertheless. There is an inland village back in the far mountains where the faithful have gathered together a few hard-to-get boards and have tied them together with rattan, making a shed some ten by twenty feet, with a one-way roof. It is their "church," built with their own hands, and there they meet every week to pray and praise and encourage each other.



## HORSES AND CHARIOTS TO DELIVER

Here is a story of fanatical persecution and hard-to-explain deliverance as told me by a valiant Seventh Day Adventist missionary at Puno by the great lake-in-the-sky. He and his wife were working their way around a big circuit and stayed one night with a devoted follower in a fanatical town. In the morning a mob gathered, and began to stone the house. The uproar grew apace. The roof was set on fire several times, but promptly extinguished. Violence increased. The door was barricaded as best the besieged could do. A beam was secured and used as a battering ram, and it looked as if all were lost. "Kill them, kill them," they were shouting. In telling the story the honest missionary said, "I was frightened, and there is no use in denying it. I thought that it was the end."

The door was giving way under the heavy artillery, when with a great shout the mob took to its heels and ran out of sight. Silence settled on the tormented household. The besieged climbed out over the barriers and in amazement could see no man anywhere. "What in the world has happened?" the missionary wanted to know.

"Didn't you see them coming to rescue you?" asked the householder.

"I saw no one except the mob."

"That is strange," muttered the owner of the house. "There was a great host of people coming over the hill to deliver us and when the crowd saw them, they all ran away."

Nor did the persecutors return, though no visible defenders were seen by the persecuted missionaries. The explanation? I have none. There is food for thought in the fact that what the educated teachers were unable to see was discerned by the childish and simple, but I can only report what was told to me by faithful and reliable witnesses.

### SIMON ZELOTES

There is Simon, a countryman, raised to toil from childhood, with never a day in school in all his life. Twenty-three years old, illiterate, drunken, a nuisance to his friends, a burden to himself, one night he drifted into a religious meeting, heard a lecture on temperance, was convinced, came again to a gospel meeting, was convicted of his sins, turned to the Lord and gave his name to the church. He found a teacher, soon picked up the three "Rs" and other rudiments, began to take an active part in meetings, became an exhorter, took a short course in homeopathy, bought books, began to study, was appointed supply pastor of a three-

town circuit, threw himself into the work, pushed out into towns and villages around about, drove steadily on until his little three-point charge took in half a state and twenty-two towns. Two exhorters appeared to help him. The work is growing. Such is the case of one Simon, who is still at it, the friend, helper, pastor, doctor and counselor of *todo el mundo*, "all the world"—in short, everybody. It is apostolic.

#### ONE OF THE VILLAGES

There was a student pastor at Hepsidam, but not much else except six members, all women with lean-to husbands. The "church" was a twelve by sixteen rented room, with one door, no window except a small skylight; a little platform, a baby organ, a box pulpit. That was all.

The student was a young fellow without discretion and set his goal at fifty souls for the year, a large order for Hepsidam. Nothing happened for a time. Then one of the members, a seamstress, singing about her work in the house of a certain rich man's wife, was challenged and led to tell her story of peace at heart in the midst of grinding poverty. The rich woman could make little of it, and a few weeks later the district superintendent came and by request called and explained the way of life more fully to a woman who said that she had not smiled in

six years, since the death of her only child. Peace in believing she found but when asked to come to church, wanted to know how a decent person could be expected to attend such a hole-in-the-wall as constituted the "church" of that village.

Such a question was difficult to answer. Why did they not get a better place? No funds. Very well, her husband owned a good hall, why not rent it? No funds. But he would let them have it at half price; still no funds. One fourth, then? At last it was done; the people came in; the congregation grew; a leading doctor joined the band of the faithful; the tide turned; fifty souls were won during the year. Acts of the Apostles again!

### THE APOSTOLIC HUG

A Latin embrace may be a very impersonal affair and usually is, as every missionary knows. But there are times when it registers something very genuine and noble in the heart of a man. There have been Conference closing hours when I have been given the hearty and sincere *abrazo* by every man in the place and there was something very good and wholesome about it. When the first Latin America Central Conference came to its close in its session of April, 1924, in the Seawall Church of Panama, there was a warm

and spontaneous demonstration that sent every man home with a sense of something real and strong in a fellowship that had brought us together from points five thousand miles apart as representatives of nine different nations banded together in common cause. There are times when a real *abrazo* beats a cold handshake all to pieces.

### THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT

There are stirrings of heart everywhere, and sometimes there have been hours when it was easy enough to believe in the manifestations of Pentecost. There was an Institute where we were shut in together for four days of outer storm. Sunday came, we gathered around the dining-room fire and Bishop Oldham spoke to us on the love of God. From glory to glory the sermon proceeded while we listened and pondered the way of the Spirit. After a time, with neither warning nor apology, one pastor arose, crossed the room to where sat a brother against whom he had been holding a grudge of long standing. There was an embrace, a pardon asked and begged in return, and before we knew it, they were doing that all over the room. That sermon never did come to an end, it merely stopped; its work was done. There was a real outpouring of the Spirit, the genuineness of which was proven

by the after results. Any man who has witnessed one such movement will have no trouble over the question of modern miracles or repeated Pentecosts.



## CHAPTER XIII

## ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

PROBABLY Paul was not thinking of Ezekiel's wheels when he wrote his declaration to the Ephesians about God's eternal purpose to gather together all things in one in Christ, but undoubtedly the figure of the wheels becomes a convenient symbol of the rushing movement of the modern world.

A wheel consists of three principal parts, a central hub, a series of converging spokes and the outer rim. If the circle of human activities and efforts corresponds roughly to the rim of the wheel, then at its center we may look for some meeting place of the dominant movements and tendencies of the age, and ask ourselves whether it is true that there is a gathering together of all things in one, even in Christ.

Certainly in recent history there are converging lines of movement and development within the circle of life, and these focused movements must have a divine meaning for mankind. Any centering upon some other meeting point, economic self-interest, dominance of class supremacy, peculiar interpretations of history, world-empires, or what not besides, inevitably

throws history out of line and leaves us a jumbled chaos of unrelated events.

Much water has run under the bridges of life since about 1910, when the pastors were all, upon occasion, ready to proclaim with unanswerable arguments that there never could be another war. The bankers, the laborers, the farmers, and the churches would not stand for it. It sounded well, but stand for it we did, and we are more cautious now in our prophesyings. There is still war and a lot of it, and there seems to be no more democracy now than before the war to make the world safe for that valuable commodity.

Which brings us to one of the spokes in our wheel of events, namely, the radical political changes that have taken place in the past fifteen years. There was rejoicing in the overthrow of the kings in Europe; we counted them as they fell, but dictatorships rather than democracy have ruled Europe, and a steady transformation has been taking place in most of the governments of the world. North Africa has been in ferment, Russia a welter of confusion. The Caribbean world has centered its troubles in Hayti, Santo Domingo, and Cuba; our own Porto Rico has not been free from rumors of exploitation. The Filipinos are clamoring for immediate independence, regardless of conse-

quences. Unrest is stirring the millions of India; China is in a state of continued strife between rival factions; Latin America has been torn by revolutions in various countries and international strife over the unfortunate Chile-Peruvian controversy. There are sweeping political changes nearly everywhere; the old geographies are obsolete and the maps have not yet settled down to permanent form.

Not only are governments in transition but the older religious sanctions of mankind are likewise in transformation. Buddhism is imitating Western revival methods, but generally speaking, the religions of the Far East—Hinduism, Taoism, Shintoism, Buddhism and the ethical system of Confucius—are all slipping their hold on the hearts of men. Any visitor to the temples of China must come away oppressed by the deadness of it all; the unkempt shrines, the neglected altars, the dirty courts, the indifferent people, the ignorant priests; it is a spent force and lives on because nothing has in any general way yet taken its place. Mohammedanism is still a force with the followers of the Prophet, but a silent, subtle change of emphasis is slowly admitting new economic, social, and religious motives into Moslem life. In Latin America, everywhere the Roman Catholic Church is slowly, very slowly, but nevertheless surely slipping its hold on the

minds of men. At the end of the nineteenth century Rome dominated every Latin republic except Mexico. To-day, four countries have dis-established the church and several more are nominally related to the Vatican for political purposes only. In all Latin American lands there is now liberty of worship for all creeds alike and a free field for the establishment of mission schools—a long step in advance of the fanatical intolerance that prevailed in practically all these countries fifty years ago. Petty persecution still persists, but the doors are open and no man can shut them.

Which is to say that the old moral and religious sanctions are everywhere slipping; the new-forming political organizations have under them no stable moral bases. In a world in process of re-formation, humanity suffers a strain of first magnitude. These crumbling religious standards have some direct relation to the shifting of political alignments; certainly they point in the same direction.

As a third spoke in the wheel, the amazing progress and successes of the modern missionary movement are submitted. This expansion of the Christian evangel has been related not merely to evangelism but to the whole circle of human interests and activities. Men have not yet taken seriously the ethics of the Sermon on

the Mount but the missionary has secured a representative following, and he has brought it about that national Christian leaders stand before nearly every open door in all lands ready to enter in and lead a new crusade for righteousness. Gone are the old days of locked doors, rejected missionaries, scornful officials, but more significant than this is the giving way of foreign missionary dominance to the leadership of national Christian statesmen. With this change Christianity has come face to face with the opportunity of the ages to undergird the new-forming political alignments with a new moral code and the stimuli of a new spiritual life. Every major movement in the Christian cause is leading in the direction of a new morale dominated by national men of faith and devotion. In a new sense we stand at the making or breaking of human fellowship and co-operation among the peoples of the earth. We are hearing that another great war will end civilization. Precisely so, but just where, aside from the gospel of the Son of God, are we to find a power that can prevent another colossal outbreak of strife which will result in such destruction among men?

Never has been need so urgent for the right kind of missionaries nor for an adequate re-enforcement of the whole missionary situation in

its deeper and more far-reaching activities and implications. A really adequate presentation of the ethical basis of Christian faith to the intelligent leaders of life the world over might reach further and lead to more radical movements than most of us have dared to dream. In lands where we now struggle with poorly prepared national pastors, teachers, and social workers the preparation of a group of highly efficient national leaders would make possible the presentation of the Christ of a new social order in terms of compelling power.

We come to a fourth spoke in the wheel. The colleges and universities of this land to-day are crowded to capacity with the finest group of young men and women that the world has ever seen. In spite of the sometimes popular decrying of the young people of to-day, no one who knows them intimately believes that they are one whit less worthy than their fathers were. They do suffer from luxury and lax discipline, but strike for them the note of idealism, sound a challenge to personal sacrifice, a demand for heroic service, and they will yet respond in surprising numbers. Which is to say that we have in the schools the young life with which to go out and do this gigantic task of undergirding the world with new moral foundations and inspiring it with new spiritual life.



There is one more spoke in the wheel. Governments are changing, former moral sanctions are decaying, we stand in unprecedented position of vantage to undergird the new-forming alignments of life with the principles of Christ; we have made providential progress in planting our institutions in strategic positions everywhere; we have the youth of the schools of the United States, and finally, we have the money with which to do this thing. Our spokes are coming together. We need not use much white paper to prove that in all history no people have possessed such wealth as is now in the hands and pockets of the citizens of the United States and no people of any church have ever commanded such financial resources as are ours today. Professor T. N. Carver in his *New Economic Revolution in America* has set forth the facts in convincing fashion. Whatever other excuses we may plead we cannot conscientiously mention poverty as our alibi. In a recent conference of pastors and laymen, a leader asked why so many churches had failed to contribute a fair portion toward missions. One brother explained that the people had been buying property and were in debt, therefore had nothing to give. The leader allowed his eyes to wander for a moment and remarked, "That is probably true, that you are in debt, but if what I see means

anything, I infer that if you are going to the poorhouse you are going on balloon tires."

With a per capita wealth greater than any previous generation, we are not many of us going to the poorhouse. The dollar does not buy as much as it once did, which has nothing to do with the case. The significant fact is that a day's work buys more than it ever did before. Day laborers live better than kings of by-gone centuries. We have an unprecedented surplus of this world's goods, and here find another converging factor in a world situation.

With less than seven per cent of the world's population, the United States owns eighty-five per cent of its automobiles and spends ten billion dollars per year on all kinds of gasoline vehicles. The period between 1904 and 1924, according to the statistics published by *The Manufacturers' Record*, was marked by the most astounding increase of wealth that history has ever known. The total wealth of the country increased from 107 billion in 1904 to 321 billion dollars in 1922. In twenty years the stock of money in the country increased from 2,803 million to 8,746 million dollars, while the value of manufactured articles increased from 14 to 60 billion dollars. The total of life insurance carried by American citizens increased from 16 billion dollars in 1916 to 63 billion in 1924, and

the vast bulk of this gain is held by working men.

In the face of these vast economic gains of the last score of years, who shall say that the church is unable to do the thing that is vital to the regeneration of the rest of the world? Our danger is that of falling into the error of the rich man who busied himself with barns for his increasing harvests, forgetting certain other more enduring values for which he was so soon called to account.

Were this great gain in total wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, living in luxury at the expense of a down-trodden and slave-driven working population, we might be in a different case. But when one hundred and ten million people own twenty-three million motor cars and every laborer lives in comfort, earning wages that compete with the salaries of college professors and the remuneration of doctors and lawyers, we will have to look for some other alibi if we wish to evade our responsibility for the extension of the cause of Christ into all the world.

Are we asking too much? Is the home church on the defensive because of the overheavy demands of all sorts of philanthropic, benevolent, educational, and missionary causes? Without going into the merits or demerits of some proj-

ects being carried forward by professional promotion agencies, the residual fact of the situation is that an absurdly small average contribution from the people whose names now appear on the records of church membership of the United States would be amply sufficient for the needs of the present program of world service. A gallon of gasoline every three weeks would do the work! The remaking of a distracted world awaits a penny and a half a day from each of us!

No number of good spokes will make a strong wheel without a rim about the circumference to hold them together. Perhaps our own participation as a home church stands for the rim. If we become indifferent to world needs, the converging factors of a world situation will become meaningless for human redemption. A spoke is but a lever and must have its bearings and fulcrums if it is to carry a load. Whether this wheel of providential procedure is to be anything more than a bundle of sticks depends on what we are going to do about it.

There remains one consideration, most important of all. No wheel was ever yet a good wheel without a good hub. Here center the load and strain and lifting power of every part. Paul must have had some such focus of forces in mind when he wrote his Ephesian letter: "Showing us

how it was the purpose of his design so to order it in the fullness of the ages that all things in heaven and in earth alike should be gathered up in Christ." Here is the center of it all, and Paul is saying that there are heavenly energies that co-operate and correspond with these movements here on the earth. This is no fantastic dance of distracting circumstance that we find about us; it is an ordered universe with a divine center within the play of so-called natural forces and human efforts.

To say with Paul that "in Him" we find the ultimate meaning if it all is no mere figure of speech. In the ethics of Christ we find the only adequate basis of international agreements, in his self-giving service the only reason for investment of life and means in world betterment. In his principles of Christian stewardship lies the only workable doctrine of personal responsibility for the use of property, not for self but for humanity.

There is a glorious personal factor in this relation of all things to Christ. The world is to be saved neither by economic principles nor by "laws" of any sort, human or divine. Men are not brought to their ultimate moral decisions by abstract theories but by motives that are deeply personal. In the last analysis, patriots fight under a leader, and the issue depends more upon

the leader than upon any theories involved. If the world is to find a new basis for brotherhood, it will have to be related to a Personality great enough, strong enough, comprehensive enough and noble enough to include the highest good for every man and race. Such a Personality must be truly universal if the world is to be saved by following him. There is but one such Personality known to men. If ever all things are to be gathered up in any all-including center of converging forces and movements, they will have to be gathered up in Christ.

We have been hearing a good deal of high-sounding talk about the values of other faiths, and for all such values we give hearty thanks. But when it comes to bringing Christ down to a level with other more or less equally authoritative leaders of men, we weaken the case at its most vital point, the center. That we repudiate any spirit of intolerance toward any light that may shine in others' lanterns does not mean that we fail to find in him the supreme Light of the world and Divine center from which we draw our own illumination. If the world is to be redeemed, it will be by its only Redeemer. If our wheel is to move forward at all, it will revolve about Him who alone can co-ordinate the diverse forces of life and infuse them with his own spirit. If we are to make progress toward



the unknown land ahead of us, it will not be by spectacular forced marches but by one vast adventure with Him into his own divine thought for the races of men on the earth.

## CHAPTER XIV

## POSSESSING THE PROMISED LAND

IF the spiritual undergirding of new-forming civilizations is to be anything more than a jumble of unrelated efforts and incidents, there is need of some well-defined goals. Either we are wandering about in the wilderness of well-meant but poorly co-ordinated missionary enterprises, hoping that somehow some good may come of it all, or we are following a surveyed and charted course toward certain clearly outlined objectives. In this march toward a new heaven and earth, direction is more important than present position, and the velocity of our progress becomes a measure of our results. I met an elderly man in a distant town, living a lonely and sacrificial life. He had no method, no organized work, no classes, no converts, no entry anywhere to the situation nor approach to individuals but nevertheless insisted that he was doing a valid and valuable missionary work. In what did it consist? In the hope that sometime something might happen. A few years later he died, leaving behind him nothing that in any way would indicate that he had ever lived in that community.

National leaders in Latin America are thinking, and thinking constructively, on this problem of the direction of our movement. When the first Latin American Central Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in Panama in April, 1924, the first major problem presented for discussion was this: "What are our ideals for the church in Spanish-speaking lands? Do we look for a series of independent national denominational churches? Do we want a single evangelical church in each country, made up of all denominations, but independent of the churches of other lands? Or are we thinking of the continuance of the present denominational lines, with the closest possible co-operation on the part of such as are willing to co-ordinate their work with ours, at the same time maintaining our present relations with the world movement and organizations of our respective denominations?"

The debate was in the hands of the nationals, and, to the surprise of most of the missionaries, lasted less than twenty minutes. It was a very one-sided affair; with one accord the delegates said in substance, "We want to become national links in a world chain of the churches of our own denomination, while entering into every possible form of co-operation and fellowship with the believers of other communions."

The ideal of "one big church" in each country, composed of all the present denominations, has a plausible sound, but in practice is a rhetorical gesture, meaning nothing. When we of divided denominations in the United States are ready to merge our differences in one Protestant church it will be time to recommend such action to the mission fields, which are now far ahead of the home churches in matters of co-operation and co-ordination of forces. On the mission field the problems of the churches that refuse to come into territorial agreements or co-operative enterprises become at times as serious in disastrous results as that of the direct opposition of the non-Christians. At the bottom of these nonco-operation positions is always a claim to exclusive possession of the "true doctrine," making any compromise with "error" a betrayal of high trust. Is it any wonder that the nationals, beholding the nonagreement of such monopolists and their divisions one from another, fall into confusion and suspicion of the validity of the whole cause?

There are several co-operating denominations that are working toward the development of independent, denominational, national churches, severing organic union with the home base as soon as self-support is attained. Such ideals appeal strongly to national self-respect and

stimulate heroic and sacrificial giving and service, but fall short in that pushing back of horizons so essential to the larger development of spiritual life among men whose outlook is apt to be cramped by prejudice and short perspective.

The Latin generally knows what he wants and shows a steadiness of purpose in going after it. From Mexico to the Straits of Magellan any intelligent national pastor will state, upon inquiry, that his church has three major ideals toward which all are working. The church in these lands hopes to become self-supporting, self-extending by means of various missionary efforts indigenous and self administrated, and as a natural and inevitable result of all this, self-direction must follow. As for the one-big-church idea, Latin America has had a thorough try-out of that system and wants no more of it.

That these ideals are not empty dreams may be known from the fact that Latin American churches lead the mission world in self-support. The per-member giving for all causes is astonishingly high, considering the economic level of life. Brazil leads the list with several self-supporting denominations, albeit at the cost of helpful relations with the mother church. The National Missionary societies now in operation

show a high development of administrative ability. All pastors of national churches in the entire field are now natives of the lands where they serve. Nearly all district superintendents are in the same class. The teaching staffs of our schools in some of these countries are now almost wholly national. The final step in self-administration will come in due time, and probably a short time, as the natural and welcome development of a healthy, growing church.

If Christ is proclaiming in Latin America that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, it is time to examine closely the outstanding characteristics of that kingdom and visualize as clearly as possible the goals toward which we are moving. Where should we place the emphasis if we are to achieve a more effective evangel?

1. First of all, and perhaps most urgently needed now, is a group of well-trained, efficient national leaders in education and evangelism. We have followed something of a hit-or-miss policy in the preparation of leaders. We have often waited, hoping that the Lord would call somebody or other, without definite effort to help call some of the best products of our schools into Christian service. Surely, we should be able to train enough Christian teachers to meet the needs of our own classrooms. That a mission should occupy a field for a term of years



without producing a single outstanding school principal, indicates that we have been busy here and there—doing something else! This result, where found, indicates usually that the control of the field has been kept in the hands of some home board or group of secretaries who have not been thinking of native leadership, but of going out to teach the heathen.

Here arises a much-vexed question as to the advisability of sending native young men and women to the United States for higher training. The results of such action often have been disappointing and sometimes tragic. Either the youngsters have not returned at all, or have come back with their heads so twisted on their shoulders that they have been useless, or at best serious problems in the mission. Such exposure at too early an age to North American life has often brought about the copying of the worst of our civilization which the returning student carried back to his home land to plague us who sent him away.

There is, however, a place and time for United States experience for the student, and that place is reached after the young man or woman has spent some years in actual service as teacher or pastor, and has come to some maturity of experience and balance of judgment. A man thirty or thirty-five years old may profit greatly by a year

or two of study and travel in the States. In the activities of education, church organization, social service, and some teaching and preaching experience great benefits may accrue to these mature students. Several thousand dollars a year invested in a few carefully selected cases might bring large returns to the fields later on.

2. Leading missionary educators and administrators of various denominations agree that the outstanding educational need of South America is that of a group of strategically located schools of outstanding merit, well staffed and equipped for effective service. In the main our schools have been fairly well adapted to the needs of thirty years ago. Our great embarrassment to-day consists in the encouraging fact that everywhere the national schools have moved up fifty years in equipment, teaching staff, and modern pedagogical methods, leaving our mission schools from twenty to thirty years behind the times.

Mission schools in Latin lands are finding their way to closer co-ordination with the prevailing educational system of government schools. In some cases this is difficult for the reason that the government schools are in a state of transition and change their courses and methods every year. But, in general, we are abandoning our aloof policy and our disposition to

set up a little United States wherever we go and are beginning to take into consideration the predicament of our graduates who, when they leave us, find themselves unable to make contacts with national higher institutions and out of touch with the people with whom they must work for life.

We have given too scant consideration to the basic principle of pedagogy that there is a serious psychological handicap imposed upon any person who is educated in a tongue foreign to the life in which he must work and live. Thought-processes are vitally related to language forms and our English-educated young people go out at a distinct disadvantage beside those who have been trained in their own speech. We have come far in a movement toward a broader and more constructive educational foundation in our schools and the results are justifying the present course.

Nothing is to be gained by disguising our Christian purpose in these schools. Where timidity has prevailed in the religious approach we have gained nothing in the way of compensation. Again and again this policy has been abandoned in favor of a frank statement of our evangelistic purpose with an inevitable toning up of the morale of the school. Very few if any pupils have been withdrawn because of required

chapel exercises and Bible study as a part of the curriculum. Surely, the churches at the home base are not contributing missionary funds with which to conduct purely secular schools, or to allow our patrons to suppose, as many of them are inclined to do, that we are running mission schools for commercial profit. "A school is a gold mine," exclaimed one father on registration day when he paid the tuition for his boy. When the missionary principal tried to explain that the tuitions fell far short of paying actual expenses, the patron shrugged his shoulders and exclaimed, "Why, then, do you do it?" The way to dissolve this misconception is to state frankly our true motives, which at least are comprehensible and satisfactory.

One of the outstanding needs of mission schools is that of a comprehensive and uniform course of religious education, carefully graded and adapted to the peculiar conditions of Latin lands. Substantial progress is being made toward the adoption of such a course, but there is ever to be considered the tendency of successful educators to follow their own courses and methods. "Do as you please in your own schools," exclaimed one successful school principal. "For me the Bible is quite good enough and I will make my own adaptations to the needs of the pupils." And any well-focused method is

better than a general, haphazard hope that somehow some good will come from it all.

3. Speaking generally, the weakest link in our chain is the evangelistic work of our missions. Institutions are greedy things that crowd out the appropriations, and once started must be sustained in some fashion, so that in practice the work of the churches is apt to be crowded to second place. In many locations the material equipment of the church is indescribably insufficient and constitutes nothing less than a disgrace to the cause of Protestant Christianity. Latin America leads the mission world in the wretchedness and utter inadequacy of its places of Protestant worship. This too in lands where everywhere great and worthy temples stand open daily that all who will may enter in and worship. In the inner thought of these people worship is associated with architectural dignity and æsthetic values. Is it any wonder that we have not reached the better classes? Is it strange that the pupils from our schools have not taken much interest in our churches?

Tragic is the need of a few outstanding, well-equipped, thoroughly organized national churches as stimulating examples of what we are trying to do. There is no land where the gospel will receive a more eager and sincere response than here, provided it is presented by a man

who has something to say and provided that he has a half-way decent place in which to say it. Granted that church organizations are not builded like houses but must grow from living roots, we may at least do some definite planting and watering and expect in due time a harvest. Latin America is ripe for a general forward movement in evangelism, through the adequate presentation of the social, personal, and spiritual principles of the evangel of Jesus by a group of men who know how to speak in terms of contemporary life. But they will have to have some decent housing for their congregations, or they will find themselves speaking to the down-and-out derelicts of society, with little hope that their message will reach beyond the individual lives of those who are present and listen.

Part of the disinclination of the Young Men's Christian Association to relate its religious work to established churches is due to the narrow polemic character of much of the preaching and part of it to the wretched housing of the work in many parts of the country.

The remedy for this situation, like that of the educational work, lies in the adoption of a definite policy and goal. In a few cases, well-trained missionary deaconesses are rendering high service in the reorganization and general



toning up of local churches. A successful pastor from the United States might very well become the assistant to some national pastor and merge himself and his broader service in the strengthening of his leader and the spiritual transformation of the church.

There are needs that run deep down into the roots of life. We have often followed an opportunist method of finding ministerial candidates and training them for the church. In contrast to the Young Men's Christian Association surveys its field, studies its prospects, definitely approaches and calls them to secretarial service, then puts them to school for three years of intensive training.

The high average ability and efficiency of these men commands instant attention in any Association headquarters. If we are to improve the grade of pastors, we may well set about it in definite purpose to pick the best we can find, give them the best we have and then expect from them the best of which they are capable.

We need in all Latin America the flexibility of the mind of Christ and his unlimited adaptation of methods to ends. Our tendency to fall into set methods and prescribed forms with recognized doctrinal emphases and evangelistic repetitions may well give way to the fresh and gripping vitality with which Jesus met each

situation on its merits and ever varied his methods to meet the men with whom he dealt.

4. There is room for a comprehensive and sympathetic study of the whole case for the Christian message in Latin lands. We might begin with a survey of needs, conditions, and resources of men and means. Something of this has already been done but there is room for much more thorough work. In any such study there is room for a large participation of national men and women. We have definitely abandoned the naïve idea of importing a religion from abroad, a something essentially exotic in its method and message, and we are not now thinking very much of adapting the methods of other lands to local conditions. The permanent forms of Christian service, whether in education, evangelism, or social service of whatever kind, must grow up out of the life of the people and be vitally related to the needs of resources of whatever locality. It is the inner, more abundant life that is to work out methods from the material at hand and produce an indigenous Latin movement that will take its place with the organized Christian forms of other lands, a member of His body, even the church.

## CHAPTER XV

## CHRIST IN MEXICO

MODERN church history will record few more dramatic episodes than the struggle between the political pretensions of the Holy Roman Empire and the efforts of the Mexican people to maintain a free and sovereign government. Most people of the United States have come to believe that separation of church and state is well nigh universal, "of course." Since we ourselves are not greatly troubled by papal political pretensions, therefore others cannot be in a very bad way. Only observing and impartial residents of those Spanish American countries where Rome still holds the whip hand as the state church can understand how difficult is the situation for those who believe in and try to realize the political, intellectual, and spiritual liberties of the common people.

Protestants in the United States hesitate to discuss the political ambitions of Rome, as such discussions are apt to take on the color of attacks on somebody's religion, a procedure properly abhorrent to free peoples. The returned missionary from China or India or Africa may speak freely of the miseries of child

widowhood, the tortures of foot-binding or the horrors of voodooism, and there are none to object. But let one begin to describe the intolerances of Latin America, the superstitions of an active miracle-working center, the wretched exploitations of the Andean Indians, and some one is apt to get up and walk out in indignant protest against the narrowness of the missionaries' point of view.

Dramatic and informing is the ecclesiastical history of Mexico. A hundred years before the pilgrims landed in New England, Hernando Cortez landed at Vera Cruz, made his way up to the central valleys of Mexico, conquering and destroying as he went. The land was inhabited by various nations of Indians whose inter-tribal quarrels opened the door for the conquerors. The destroyers had no appreciation of the good qualities of the high civilizations that they crushed to the earth. "Their hearts had a disease that could be cured only with gold," they told their victims, but the disease grew with the remedy. The ancient people lived by agriculture, built great cities, left marvelous monuments; a written literature and a highly developed governmental system marked their social order. Their astronomy is still a wonder, their religion was more bloody than merciful. This last gave the conquerors excuse for destroy-

ing temples, records, images, and monuments. They claimed to find the devil in them all.

With the Spaniards came the missionaries, many of them doubtless good men, who gave themselves to the baptizing of the Indians. From one to ten thousand was considered the day's work of an able-bodied priest. The Indians soon discovered that one way to mitigate a little the ruthless barbarity of the conquerors was to submit to a painless baptism which was soon over and in no way interfered with their pagan cults.

Followed three hundred years of combined rule of Spain and Rome, and Rome lost no time in setting up a complete institution of mediæval ecclesiasticism. All education was in charge of the church and was provided for "those who were able to profit by it," that is, the landed aristocracy. The Indians were impressed as farm laborers, and by the church were put at the most astonishing program of church building that the world has ever seen. Mexico to-day is dotted with churches great and small, set beside flowing streams, on rising hills and street intersections everywhere. Great, beautiful buildings of stone and tile, they stand strewn about the landscape with their graceful towers, glazed domes and softening pastels of façade and altar and buttressed walls.

It is certain that highly skilled architects taught these Indians to hew and lay these stones. The tragedy of it is that in three hundred years they never taught an Indian to build a schoolhouse nor a decent place in which to live and raise a family. To see these churches at their best, one should go to Cholulu, near Puebla, and stand upon the summit of the holy hill and count, as I have done, a hundred churches in sight, ninety of them empty and deserted, scattered about the valley in open fields, far from human habitations, left to the owls and bats, but strong for a thousand years yet. This was what the church did with the Indians.

It may be conjectured that through these centuries the church was not "going to the poor-house." Vast estates were acquired in one way or another. The churches were filled with priceless treasures of art; silver, gold, jewels, robes, imported paintings and altar fittings, and what not besides. Steadily the revenues of the church increased until in the last year of Spain's dominion, while the government got on with eighteen millions of pesos (\$9,000,000) the church received from all sources fifty-two millions. After three centuries of "education" under supervision of the church, the literacy is variously stated as being from one half of one per cent to one and a half per cent. One third of all values in the



country had come under control of the church. The present archbishop says that the reason why the church did not do more for the Indian was because there was no opportunity to do so. Doubtless they were so busy doing things *to* the Indian that they had little time in which to do anything *for* him.

In 1821 Mexico threw off the yoke of Spain and set up independent political housekeeping. The first blow for liberty was struck by a Catholic priest, Hidalgo, sometimes called the Washington of Mexico, and the second notable leader was Morelos, another Catholic, but both were repudiated and excommunicated by the church. After eleven years of struggle Mexico was free, so far as Spain was concerned, but the result was what would happen on board an ocean steamer if all navigation officers were thrown overboard and no one was left who knew how to steer. In Mexico no one knew how to steer the ship of state; democracy cannot exist with a literacy of one per cent. Chaos followed, but with Rome ever holding the whip hand over the situation and steadily gaining in property holdings until by the middle of the century, according to reliable historians, Rome controlled one half of the property values.

Then came the Lincoln of Mexico, Benito Juarez, full-blooded Indian, man of the people,

indomitable patriot, doughty champion of the liberties of the oppressed. As was to have been expected, he had the priests to fight from the start. It soon became evident that only by breaking the iron grip of the church upon the country could any advance be made. Step by step he fought his valiant way until in 1857 the new constitution and its subsequent legislation of 1859 disestablished the church, secularized the cemeteries, made matrimony a civil contract, and "nationalized" the vast holdings of the hierarchy. By this term is meant the restoring to the people of the great estates and commercial holdings that Juarez and his party felt had been wrongfully taken from them. However, it must never be forgotten that the church was left the full, free, and taxless use of all churches, parsonages, and schools, except where such were merely cloaks to hide illegal nunneries and secret orders, or where church buildings were abandoned by the priests. Down to the present time the government has never interfered with the exercise of purely religious acts on the part of Mexican priests.

It was hardly to be expected that the church would accept this situation gracefully, and it was inevitable that in one way or another much of this property, or at least the revenue therefrom, should find its way back into the treas-

uries of the church. With the coming of Maximilian the Roman power made a supreme effort to set up in the New World a mediæval Catholic empire, but the work of Juarez had gone too deeply into the minds of the people, and Mexico would have none of it. Under Porfirio Diaz the church regained much ground and the foreign priest came more and more to control the situation, with especial reference to the revenues of these estates, and constant interference in political matters.

A few years ago a high Roman Catholic authority issued a statement to the effect that there were two classes of priests in Mexico: the native-born, Mexican ecclesiastics, who were uniformly good men, giving their lives for the uplift of the people; and, second, the foreign-born priests, who had no patriotic interests, who administered their offices for gain, ground the faces of the poor, robbed the people, constantly meddled in politics, and were implicated in nearly every revolution and plot of the times. It was declared that of thirty-six bishops, thirty-two were foreigners, and the foreigner was in control everywhere.

In 1917 a constitutional convention met at Queretaro and drafted a new constitution which was adopted. The laws of 1857 and 1859 were reaffirmed and a new chapter added making it

illegal for anyone not a Mexican by birth to exercise the ministry in Mexico. No effort was made to define what was meant by "exercise the ministry" and no legislation was passed upon this provision of the constitution. Mexico, in 1917, had an abundance of problems to face, and left the church to itself for the time being. Possibly the church would have been let alone much longer had it not been that on February 2, 1926, a letter was issued from the Vatican calling on good Catholics to engage in "united action" under the present legal restriction imposed upon the church in Mexico. A few days later the archbishop issued a statement saying that neither he nor any of those associated with him had any intention of obeying the law, but would ever yield first allegiance to Rome. The government then announced that the law would be enforced, and that all foreign priests who persisted in exercising the ministry would be deported from the country. The officials of the courts called upon the archbishop and held a hearing in his house, with the purpose of avoiding the embarrassment to him of a public trial. The matter was smoothed over for the moment, but the agitation against the government continued, and the deportations began, both of foreign priests and nuns, but in all cases the option was given of remaining in the country

upon the simple expedient of obeying the constitution.

Late in February, 1926, President Calles issued a statement in which he said that the government had no intention of interfering with the practice of any religion, but would enforce the law. All Mexican-born priests and pastors were entirely free to exercise the ministry. As to Protestants, they had always obeyed the spirit of the law, had never meddled in politics, and were free to go on with their work, provided only that they kept within the constitution. Had Protestants assumed the same law-defying attitude as Catholics they would have been deported with equal promptness. That Protestants were allowed to proceed with their work was due to their law-abiding conduct. In some cases fanatical local officials closed a few Protestant schools, but these were soon permitted to reopen with government sanction. Protestant missionaries are not at liberty to marry, bury, baptize, or administer a communion service, but since all pastors of churches are now Mexicans by birth, this causes little inconvenience. Religious education is freely permitted in all secondary schools, but in missionary primary schools religious teaching must be given at some other hour and place than in the schoolrooms.

Vigorous propaganda in the United States

failed to convince the American people that a religious persecution was in progress in Mexico, even though the Catholics there organized a "League for the Protection of Religious Freedom," and later on an economic boycott for the purpose of paralyzing business, bankrupting the country, and putting the government out of power. It is heartily to be hoped that the "League for the Protection of Religious Freedom" will continue its good work, after the cessation of hostilities, and will spread to other lands, where religious persecution has prevailed for four hundred years. It is a rare privilege to read in a Catholic periodical of Mexico City a demand for religious toleration. Had this League been operating in Panama in 1916, the Congress of Protestant missionaries and workers might not have been compelled to walk out of Panama and meet on the Canal Zone, after a contract had been signed for the use of the government theater. The bishop made strenuous objection to a Protestant meeting and the contract was canceled. A League for the Protection of Religious Freedom might have prevented the presentation of a proposed concordat between the republic which now administers the land that Pizarro conquered and the Vatican, by which all matrimony, all education, cemeteries, and religious observances were to re-



vert to the control of the representative of Rome. That the contract was dropped before adoption was due to the efforts of the university students who combined with organized labor and defeated the proposal. Yea, verily, this League for Protecting Religious Freedom is a good thing.

The Mexican government has dedicated itself heartily to four major proposals. The determination of whether the ultimate sovereignty of the land is to rest in the Vatican or in the administration in Mexico is certainly a major issue. The policing of the country is an achievement of first magnitude and has registered uniform high success. At this writing it is as safe to travel in Mexico as in the United States. Trains run on time and with efficient personnel. It is a common sight to see a peon trotting down the streets of Mexico City with a bag of gold on his back, transferring specie from one bank to another, or between offices and banks, and no one pays any attention to him. A tourist agent was beset with letters from people in the States wanting to know whether it would be safe to visit Mexico. He replied to all by saying that if the prospective tourist thought that he could get safely to the border, the agent would agree to get him back in good condition.

To be sure, there are reports of riots and uprisings over religious matters with occasional

bloodshed. The cause is not far to seek. The law requires all priests and pastors in charge of churches to register, for the very proper purpose of determining who is responsible for the conduct of these institutions. Protestant pastors regularly and cheerfully comply, but Catholic priests refuse to register, claiming that to do so would imply that they were amenable to the law of the land which they everywhere deny. Occasionally some mayor or chief of police becomes impatient, sends a squad of police to the church to bring up the priest and ascertain who is who in Mexico. News travels rapidly, a mob collects, feeling runs high, the priest is being persecuted, and somebody gets hurt. But who is to blame?

The third major undertaking is the establishment on a large scale of rural education. Four thousand primary schools were opened within one year and a half of the inauguration of the Calles government. A hundred and thirty thousand boys and girls were given a chance to rise above the hopeless levels of complete illiteracy. Good normal schools are preparing as rapidly as possible competent teachers for this extension of primary education to all of Mexico.

Basic to the whole economic problem of Mexico is the land question. Spain gave the land to favorites of the crown and left the Indians industrial slaves. Rome encouraged this

system as a convenience for ecclesiastical purposes. All the state of Morelos at one time was owned by twelve men. Nominally the Indian received a few cents per day. Actually each year found him more deeply in debt to the estate owner. Day wages now in agricultural regions runs from fifteen to thirty-five cents per day, and the laborer feeds himself. The government is heroically facing this situation and is breaking up the big estates and dividing the land among the common people. Where titles exist to present holdings they are respected, and compensation at a fair price is arranged in bonds running through twenty years. The man who gets the land pays for it in twenty annual installments with low interest. An agricultural loan bank supplies small sums of money with which to procure seed, tools, and get a start on the soil. Where no titles exist, the land is ex-appropriated and used for the people. I have visited some of the "colonies," as they are called, and the evidences of thrift and industry speak volumes for the capacity of these people for self-help, once they have a chance. It will take ten years yet to work through the cases now on file, but good progress is being made each year toward the final adjustment of the land problem of Mexico.

Taking it all through, there has been no religious persecution by the Mexican government.

The agitations of recent years have been a political struggle to determine who is to be the master of Mexico. That the situation may change in the near future no one can deny. What Mexico needs from the United States is moral support and political noninterference. The passive backing given by the United States government to the Obregon government in the revolution of 1923 served notice to all Latin America that Washington is a friend of constitutional government and has no intention of pushing the weaker to the wall nor of taking advantage of any other American republic. The effect was wholesome throughout the length of Latin America.

## CHAPTER XVI

## A PANAMA PARABLE

PERHAPS a century hence our successors may look back upon us and wonder what was the reason that we knew not the day of our visitation. Doubtless by that time it will be evident to all that God was trying to say something to us and that we were slow to get the point.

There is a certain parable for the present situation of the church, in an experience which many travelers have gone through, in common with the writer. There is recognized exultation in noting the swift and controlled progress of a great ship in the open sea, with its movement and power as day after day the vessel plows ahead regardless of winds and waves and the day's run tells the mastery of passing circumstance.

Something like this marked the progress of the foreign mission's work of the church through the years of plenty that followed the close of the World War. There were workers and re-enforcements and funds and there were purpose and direction and movement steadily ahead. It looked as if we should go right valiantly on

until the task should at least be declared well begun.

But it has happened that the traveler, crossing the Caribbean or coming in through the Gulf of Panama, has sighted land ahead, at first afar, then nearer with attendant menace to navigation, slow speed and maritime precautions. Presently the open sea is behind and a narrow channel makes any direction except a straight line impossible. It is slow business now and after a time of creeping along, closed gates loom ahead and if the ship is to move at all it must be to the rear. Then the gates close behind and the ship lies a helpless prisoner.

Something like this has come upon us in these days. We were making good progress, when the channel narrowed, with walls on both sides, difficulties all about, impassable barriers ahead, and before we can back out of this strait place, the gates shut behind us and we are in despair.

Then comes to the passenger a never-to-be-forgotten experience. When all possible progress ends, something happens. Up from below the waters come in with a rush and the ship, shut in on every side, begins to rise straight up. It would be wholly unbelievable were we not in the secret of it. The very restrictions make the lifting possible. In twelve minutes the vast bulk



has risen to a new level of navigation and when the gates ahead open, goes out free on a higher plane of motion and in a different kind of water from anything attainable in a lifetime of navigation of the open sea.

There are, to the first-time passenger, some astonishing things about that lock operation. It is all done in complete silence. Not a word is spoken, nor an order shouted; there is no creaking of cables nor groaning of windlasses. Every man in his place, every motion understood in advance, the ship rises in a silence that is supremely impressive. All the ship's crew and passengers might groan and strain at ropes and tackle and shout themselves hoarse without lifting the ship an inch.

There is high intelligence and complex cooperation in it all. Up in the control house beside the lock there is a long table with a model of all that is down below and there are valves and levers and push buttons. The lock master has his eye on all that happens below and his hand controls every movement that is made. That he happens to be out of sight of those on deck in no way interferes with his control of the operation. Every man of the deck and lock crew is under his superintendence.

Any reflective passenger who asks himself just what, after all, lifts the ship, will readily enough

understand that there are stored up in the waters of the lake the floods from the Chagres River and that these waters are impounded the year around, ready to do their work. Certainly, no artificial rain-making could lift a ship; it takes twelve months of clouded skies and out-poured showers to keep that lake full.

This parable needs little interpretation. If our ship of world service is in a strait place, it may be that this is God's way of lifting the purpose and spirit and service of his people to new levels of devotion and sacrificial service. When the work drags and means are scant we are apt to rush about, get the crew together, and begin to groan and strain with the ropes of a new campaign. Perhaps we appoint new leaders, or change the official names of the old ones. We hurry about and shout orders with small result. If we could batter down the gates ahead that hinder our progress we might go on as before.

It may be that God is trying to stop just this rushing about and continual tinkering with the ropes and pulleys, and to this end has brought us into a strait place and to a full stop. He would lift us to higher levels of purpose and endeavor. It is not speed and bulk results that we need so much as a deeper and more effective approach to the inner spirit and heart of the peoples to whom we go. We have been very

busy trying to reach them on the level of intellectual culture, with our United States efficiency and organization of missionary leadership, with our hit-and-miss evangelism. But now our boasted rapid expansion has come to a stop and we find ourselves bewildered in the face of insurmountable obstacles.

Is it true that there are no limits in God? That Christ is able to supply all our wants? To read Paul's letters one would never suspect that money was the all-important first consideration of effective missionary service. He does not spend much time exhorting the Jerusalem church to reach its quota on penalty of seeing the whole cause collapse. Apparently, Paul was thinking in terms of a higher force than that of material resources and based his project on a something in Christ that was able to release spiritual forces on higher levels that would lift also the collection for the saints. And it was this higher something, this upper level of living, that multiplied and made effective the limited resources of the believers of his day.

No cloudburst could fill the locks of the Panama Canal without at the same time wetting the rest of the country. Purely local measures are of small value in a general emergency. The power that lifts comes from the showers that fall over a wide reach of country. If our ship of

service is to be floated to a higher level, there must first be abundant showers of blessing and power over the whole church in all lands. This is not a question of a department of the church; it is the life of the world-cause that is at stake. And these showers, if our parable has meaning, will fall, not merely at times of special effort, collections or passing revivals but will be distributed pretty much throughout the year. There are rainy seasons on the Isthmus, to be sure, as there have always been in the church, seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, but it is not the showers of a week or an every-night-for-six-weeks affair that lift the level of the lake. It is the steady movement of clouds that more or less fill the year. And not only is the ship lifted in the process, but the whole land is refreshed, fruits and flowers grow in abundance, and where the waters go there is life.

Which brings us to the source of our victory that overcometh the world. There was nothing very remarkable about the establishment of the cause in the first century except the poverty of its material resources and the large dependence of the pioneers on Christ. They spent little time apologizing, defending, arguing his divinity; they proclaimed him and exhibited him in their changed lives until men who knew them ex-

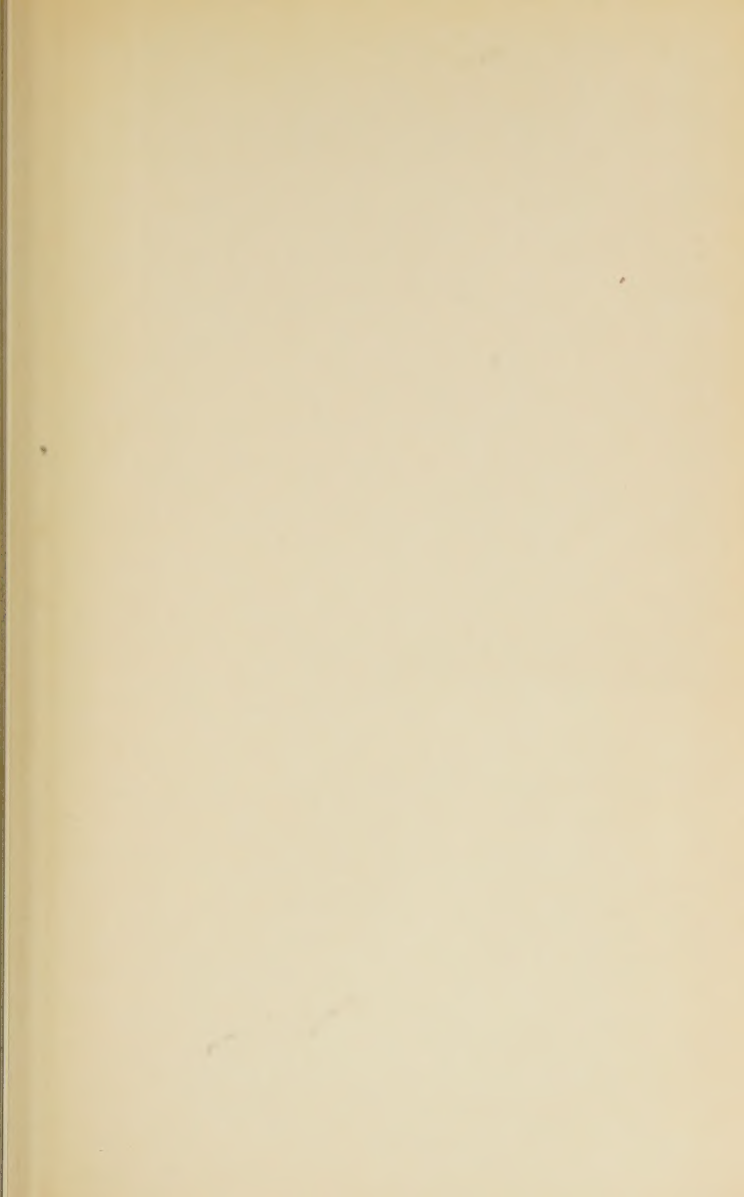
claimed that they had been with Christ. Their vivid consciousness of his abiding presence led men out, not to argue a dogma nor denounce their friends who might differ with them, but to bear witness in his name. Being occupied in presenting Christ to men, they were not greatly concerned for the time being with matters of form and ceremony. These came later to the confusion of believers and the restraining of the free witness of Pentecost. When this happened the apostolic age ended, but its spirit is with us to-day, and may yet come to its most glorious development in the life of the church in all lands.

In our hours of difficulty and limited progress we have a sure recourse; we may fix our eyes on Jesus and pray for rain.





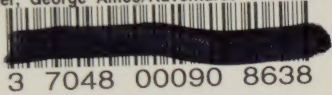




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